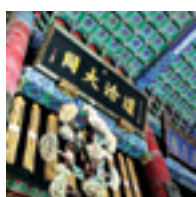


When reaching the Drum and Bell towers, the central axis is actually 300 meters off the meridian!  
**Page 10**



Grandfather stones (harubang) are among Jeju's more intriguing features.  
**Page 16**



"I still hate saying goodbye to my dogs though, I get very attached to them."  
**Page 14**



# BEIJING TODAY

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 4 2005

NO. 192

CN11-0120

HTTP://BJTODAY.YNET.COM

## Foreign Investment Who's Getting Rich?

A report by a Ministry of Commerce think tank raises questions about the benefits multinationals bring to China

By Qiu Jiaoning

As multinationals from different industries and countries continue to flock to China, the joys of Coca-Cola and the style of Starbucks have become an integral part of urban life. But how much these companies are contributing to China's overall prosperity remains a matter of some debate.

Vast levels of foreign investment continue to flood into the country, dazzling domestic enterprises. China saw foreign direct investment (FDI) exceeding US \$550 billion by the end of September 2004. Both exports and imports of multinational corporations account for more than half of the nation's total, while the taxes they pay account for 20 percent of the total tax revenue. They also employ some 22 million local staff. Foreign investment has to be regarded as the growth engine of China's economy.

However a report released Wednesday last week by the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation (CAITEC), a think tank for the Ministry of Commerce, offers a new perspective on multinational corporations in China.

According to the report, FDI in China grew from US \$40 billion in 2000 to more than \$60 billion in 2004 with the annual FDI accounting for 10 percent of the country's fixed asset investment. However, annual global FDI shows a falling tendency over the same period.

Wang Zhile, director of CAITEC's Research Center on Transnational Corporations, said in the report that China is now a hot destination for multinational corporations not only in terms of preferential policies, but also thanks to its stable, transparent and promising investment environment. Of the 500 worldwide largest multinationals, over 90 percent have made investments in China.

In an interview yesterday, Wang told *Beijing Today*, "Participation by multinational corporations has boosted the development of China's economy. China should persist in actively attracting foreign investment. But we must at the same time be aware of some negative impacts brought by multinational corporations."

### Gap widens between GDP and GNI

Foreign investment has contributed to China's prosperity by promoting growth of the gross domestic product (GDP), however China's gross national income (GNI) has not increased at a corresponding rate. Between 1993 and 2003, China's GNI fell further and further behind the GDP. The gap is now about 100 billion yuan per year.

"The gap indicates that part of the value generated in China did not go into the national income, but actually flew abroad. As more and more multinational corporations have reaped profits in China, their earnings from the country are bound to grow rapidly. From a historical perspective, it is an unavoidable stage for a country when absorbing huge amounts of foreign investment," said Wang.

The gap between GNI and GDP

can highlight the different performance stages of a country's foreign economic strategy. In the first stage, there is almost no gap, as the country is underdeveloped and its economic system lacks exchanges with outside resources. In the second stage, GNI lags behind GDP with the gap widening when the country's economic system starts opening to the outside world and making active use of foreign investment, greatly benefiting the multinationals. In the third stage, GNI increases, balancing or even exceeding GDP, when the country further opens up its economic system to the point where local enterprises are capable of making overseas investments. The three stages are essentially the track by which domestic enterprises develop themselves into multinationals, according to Wang.

"People needn't regard the gap as a cause for concern. The gap between GNI and GDP will narrow as Chinese companies increase their overseas investments and operations," Wang told *Beijing Today*.

"But if we take a permissive attitude, making no efforts to enhance the strength of local companies, China may step into a more prosperous situation without necessarily becoming richer. That means production may be



CAITEC researcher Wang Zhile  
Photo provided by Wang Zhile

increased without corresponding income growth," he added.

### Barriers for domestic technological innovation

There has been nationwide discussion and debate on multinationals' negative impact on technological innovation in domestic enterprises. Foreign investment has long been seen as a way of upgrading China's technological level. But this goal has yet to be achieved.

Most Chinese employees of multinational companies cannot get first hand experience with the core technology, though many multinationals introduce state-of-the-art technology to their China operations. Chinese enterprises and employees cooperating with multinationals have gained little in terms of their research and development capabilities. Some foreign auto makers, for example, are accused of discouraging research and development activities in their joint ventures in China.

In an interview in *China Business News* Wednesday, Doctor Yan Haifeng from Huazhong University of Technology gave two examples. A German company set barriers or refused their Chinese partners permission to visit the technology-related area in its factory. And a Japanese company forbade its technicians in the core technology area to make contact with related Chinese partners.



Ninety percent of the world's largest corporations have investments in China.

Photo by Du Du

According to the report, the negative impact of FDI on China's technological development could also be attributed to the lack of an institutional framework and policies that support fair and orderly competition in the market. With the continued development of domestic companies, this problem has become more pressing.

Li Huiming, a researcher at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, told *Beijing Today* Wednesday, "Chinese enterprises are still in the unfavorable situation of depending on and importing multinational's technology. It is imperative for Chinese enterprises to reduce technological dependency on multinationals and increase the ability to innovate."

"China has carried out the policy of developing technological innovation as well as technological import for a long period. However, it's time for us to pay more attention to technological innovation of our local enterprises through improving technological policy," Li said.

Li suggests Chinese enterprises should take an active part in international technological cooperation, to develop cooperative innovation, which can be regarded as the transitional link to independent technical innovation.

### Danger of foreign monopolies

Multinationals have already gained control of certain industries in China. For example, Microsoft's ubiquitous Windows operating system and Tetra Pac's packaging materials both hold a 95 percent share in the Chinese market, according to an article in *China Business Weekly* Monday.

Eastman Kodak, which has a large share of the roll film market, has strengthened its position even further with the recent pur-

chase of 13 percent of the shares of its only Chinese rival, Lucky Film, the article said.

China's glacially slow effort to introduce an anti-monopoly law is suddenly being sped up by concerns that foreign multinationals are getting to dominate key markets.

Preparation work for the anti-monopoly law began as early as 1987 but has never moved beyond the draft stage. With the newfound anti-foreign momentum, the draft could be turned into law by the end of 2005 if the process goes smoothly, according to the article.

### Multinationals' new trend in China

Multinational corporations in China focused on manufacturing in the 1990s. As the investment environment in China has been greatly improved, many multinationals have considerably increased their investments in China over the past three years. They now regard China as not only a manufacturing base, but also a worldwide market and important site for research and development.

Japanese companies have come to the force in this trend. Nine major Japanese companies including Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, Mitsui, Hitachi, Toshiba, Panasonic, Honda, Fujitsu and Toyota have established 200 new enterprises in China since 2001.

"The Chinese market is very important to us. Local demand grows so sharply that we must increase our output," a Honda spokesman told AFP Sunday.

Wang Zhile said, "In fact, Japanese multinationals are making efforts to build up the whole industry chain in China including R&D, production and marketing sale."

Many other multinationals from the US, Europe and South

'The gap indicates that part of the value generated in China did not go into the national income, but actually flew abroad. As more and more multinational corporations have reaped profits in China, their earnings from the country are bound to grow rapidly. From a historical perspective, it is an unavoidable stage for a country when absorbing huge amounts of foreign investment.'

Korea have also joined this trend to set up new firms in China.

From June 2003 to June 2004, multinationals established 200 R&D centers in China. By the end of September 2004, there were more than 750.

In light of the intensifying competition between multinationals and also from domestic companies, foreign companies have been stimulated to adjust their strategies in China since 2001. On one hand, they have started setting up R&D centers and key component manufacturing bases. On the other hand, they have greatly increased their inputs into sectors like sales and logistics.

In the 1980s, multinationals brought advanced products and equipment to China through sales of goods and technology transfer. In the 1990s, multinationals rushed to launch manufacturing enterprises, which introduced modern enterprise system to China. As to the new century, multinationals have shared new concepts with the nation through enhancing their comprehensive responsibilities. In the 1990s, multinationals have contributed to China's sustainable development with their hardware, system and concepts.

"We should focus on how to bring the initiative of the multinationals into full play for China's sustainable development," Wang emphasized.

### Achieving a balance

"Facing these problems, we can take new measures to improve the situation. But we should maintain the consistency and stability of the policies designed to attract foreign investment and further improve the environment for foreign investment," said Wang.

According to the CAITEC report, China is not overtly dependent on foreign investment, as indicated by the ratio of foreign investments to GDP and the ratio of foreign investments to total fixed assets investment.

"In fact, we believe China still has space to absorb external resources. As China's economy continues to grow and the country further implements its WTO commitments, China has a

good chance to attract even more foreign investment," said Wang.

The report said that China should keep some favorable policies for foreign investors because more countries are competing for foreign investment. As a country short of natural resources, China needs to use those resources that are in rich supply, such as low-cost manufacturing capabilities and markets, to exchange with other economies for the resources that we lack, such as technology and raw materials. Foreign investment is a key vehicle for this exchange.

"Maintaining stability of the foreign investment policy does not mean preferential treatments cannot be adjusted at all. In order to promote the quality of foreign investment, we should appropriately readjust our preferential policies," Wang said.

He suggests that the universal preferential tax rate for multinationals can be divided into different rates for different industries, regions and projects. In other words, China should offer preferential treatments to the areas and sectors where more foreign investments are needed and encouraged.

Addressing a breakfast meeting hosted by the International Business Council at the Davos World Economic Forum in Switzerland last Saturday, Vice-premier Huang Ju hammered at a similar message that China welcomes foreign investment and there is no fundamental change in China's policy to encourage and promote foreign investment.

Huang urged multinationals to expand business operations in China, set up R&D centers and regional operations across the country, and take part in the reform of China's state-owned enterprises.

With rapid economic growth, Huang said, China has become the biggest emerging market in the world and an ideal destination for foreign investment, providing important opportunities for foreign businesses.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: JIAN RONG  
EDITOR: HOU MINGXIN  
DESIGNER: LI SHI



# Visas Made More Visitor Friendly

By Liu Zhaoxi

Beijing has loosened visa requirements for foreign visitors and extended the maximum time span for foreigners' residency permits to five years. Under the new rules, foreign residents in Beijing will be allowed unlimited entry and exit within the time span of the residency permit without the need of a re-entry visa.

The new policy was announced Wednesday by the Division of Exit-Entry Administration of the Beijing Public Security Bureau.

International visitors to Beijing are

now able to apply for 6 to 12 month extensions of their visas, as many times as they wish. In the past, foreigners could only renew their visa twice, each for a period of three months.

Gao Huada, vice-director of the Division of Exit-Entry Administration said the new measures would apply to five groups of people: foreigners who are the spouses of Chinese; spouses, parents and children under 18 years old of foreigners who are working or studying in Beijing; foreign nationals of Chinese origin who are older than 60 and have purchased real estate in Beijing or

come to join direct relatives in Beijing; foreign children who were adopted in Beijing; and foreigners who have come to Beijing for a short visit, cultural exchange and activities, or business. It will take five working days to process their applications, Gao said.

Foreigners who can apply for one to five-year residency permit include top foreign professionals and investors, foreign legal representatives, returning citizens of foreign nationalities, and foreign students.

A division official, who only gave his surname as Pang, explained that top

professionals referred to senior advisers, high-tech or high-level administrative staff or personnel making great contributions to China.

The new residency permit is a single leaf attached to the visa page of a passport, replacing the current green booklets.

Beijing is the first city in China to ease visa requirements according to a regulation concerning visa issue for foreigners set up by the Ministry of Public Security of China.

(Sources: *China Daily*, *Beijing Youth Daily*, *Beijing Times*)



The new foreigner's residency permit is a single leaf attached to the visa page of a passport. Xinhua Photo

# Policies Strengthened to Support Farming

By Annie Wei

A document outlining new policies aimed at helping rural areas receive more financial help from the central and local governments was released by the State Council Sunday.

While China's GDP has increased to 9.5 percent, the average income of people in rural areas is only one-third of that of people in urban areas.

Minister of Agriculture Du Qinglin was quoted in *China View* Sunday as saying that China's development has

mainly relied on industry until now, and that it is now time for other industries to support agriculture. He also pointed out that agriculture was the fundamental, but still the weakest of China's economic sectors.

According to the document, China will further implement policies reducing or abolishing agricultural taxes, granting subsidies for certain crops and financing farmers for the use of good seed strains and farming machinery.

The document also points out that

China will protect farmland by banning the practice of using farmland for purposes other than farming, and remaking villages and towns in an effort to enable farmers and village residents to use land in an intensive and economical way.

Chen Xiwen, vice-director of the Office of Central Financial Work Leading Group said at a press conference held by the State Council on February 9 last year that from 1997 to 2003, the average income of farmers increased 4

percent, however, the disposable income of urban residents increased 8 percent. If farmers, who account for 60 percent of the China's population could not see an increase in their disposable income, the country overall could not be considered to have improved its living conditions, Chen said at the time.

At a press conference Monday, Chen said helping farmers to increase their income would be more difficult in 2005 than in 2004, because the foundation of the agriculture sector lacks stability.

# Central Bank to Open Shanghai Headquarters

By Sun Yongjian

China's central bank, the People's Bank of China (PBC), is planning to establish a second headquarters in Shanghai, president of the Shanghai Branch Hu Xiping revealed at a working conference on January 20, according to a report in *21st Century Business Herald* last Saturday.

The Shanghai headquarters will rank at vice ministry level, Hu said.

Seven to eight departments of the PBC will relocate to Shanghai, including the Credit Recruitment Administrative Bureau and the Anti-money Laundering Bureau, while the Beijing Headquarters will be responsible for setting monetary policy,

similar to the role of the US Federal Reserve, the report said.

Hu said the move would "Integrate the financial resources and to improve the internal efficiency of the central bank."

Currently the financial market in southeast China is separated into two parts. Shanghai, and Zhejiang and Fujian provinces come under the administration the Shanghai branch, and the rest is governed by the Nanjing branch.

Under the new plan, the Shanghai and Nanjing branches will be integrated into one, which will enhance Shanghai's status as China's financial center, the report said.

# Illegal Projects Respond to SEPA Bans

By Annie Wei

After issuing ban on 30 illegal construction projects nationwide on January 18, the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) announced last Monday that 22 of 30 illegal construction projects had stopped construction as required, however, three projects run by the China Three Gorges Project Corporation and another five projects have not complied with the order.

The bans are in accordance with the environment law implemented on September 1 last year, which states that no construction project may be implemented without an environmental impact assessment being completed.

On this basis, SEPA issued a pre-notice of executive penalty on the five projects last Monday and a formal notice requiring the Three Gorges Project Corp to complete its environmental impact assessment first and a fine of between 50,000 and 200,000 yuan.

Pan Yue, vice-director of SEPA said Wednesday that the administration had received responses to the notice on all eight illegal projects.

Governors from the provinces where these projects are located also said that they would not ignore the environmental impact assessment for construction approval in the future.



# UN Honors Chinese Peacekeepers in Kosovo

Chinese peacekeepers in Kosovo have been awarded United Nations peace medals for their outstanding performance. Nineteen peacekeeping police received the medals at a ceremony Wednesday in the capital Pristina. China sent the first batch of peace-keeping police to Kosovo last April.

Xinhua Photo

# 2005 Social and Economic Trends Forecast Released

By Chu Meng

The Beijing Academy of Social Sciences published an analysis and forecast of Beijing's social and economic development in 2005 Sunday. The "blue paper," written by An Qun, a researcher with the Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform, indicates that commodity prices in Beijing will increase by 3 percent this year, while shortages in coal, electricity and oil will result in price rises in public service sectors.

According to the report, prices of the three increased by 72 yuan (US \$9) per ton, 0.036 yuan (\$0.4) per kilowatt-hour and 0.44 yuan

(\$5.3) per liter, respectively, on last year.

Predicted price rises in public services will push total price levels higher this year, as will high prices of oil on the global market.

It is estimated that Beijing's GDP growth rate will reach about 10 percent next year, two points lower than 2004. One factor contributing to the lower figure is that the construction of venues for the 2008 Olympics throughout the year will push up prices of building materials. The other is that prices of agricultural products will continue to rise. In 2004, the price of food increased by 5.3 percent.

That alone had an impact on the city's overall price rises.

The report also says that the population of the capital will reach 16 million before 2008, 2 million in excess of the ideal population of 14 million. On the issue of migrant laborers, the report says that more than half of them consider Beijing a "tolerant" city.

Survey results reveal that although migrant workers earn low salaries, had unfavorable living conditions and were facing heavy burdens from family members, most recognized the value of being in the city and felt satisfied with their lives here.

# Top 500 Foreign Invested Companies Named

By Annie Wei

The Ministry of Commerce released its list of the 500 biggest foreign companies in China for 2003/2004 last Friday.

The 500 companies come from more than 30 countries and have wide range of industries, including communications equipment, electronics, automobiles, power, chemical and commercial service.

The top five are Shanghai Volkswagen Automotive, Hongfujin Precision Machining (Shenzhen), FAW-Volkswagen Automotive, Dafeng (Shanghai) Computer, and Motorola (China) Electronics.

Shanghai Volkswagen Automotive took the No. 1 spot with a 56.7 billion yuan sales value and 12 billion yuan annual growth. Motorola, which topped the list for the past three years fell four places this year.

The total sales value of the 500 companies was 2.1 trillion yuan, with growth of 37.9. There are 420 companies with sales value exceeding 1.5 billion, compared with 314 last year.

# New Policies Issued to Attract Finance

By Sun Yongjian

Beijing Authorities will issue 16 policies in the near future aimed at attracting more domestic and foreign financial institutions. Under the scheme, preferential policies offered to financial institutions by Shanghai and Shenzhen governments will be matched by Beijing, according to a report in the *Economic Observer* last Saturday.

The 16 policies include: favorable conditions on individual income taxes for senior administrative staff; special supporting policies for the development of financial institutions, including free industry and commercial registration, reduced or remitted taxes, subsidies and favorable conditions for purchasing or renting official sites; and ensuring convenience in the education of the children of expatriate staff, the report said.

# Unemployment Falls

By Annie Wei

Some 9.8 million jobs were created in urban areas in 2004, an increase of 1.3 million on 2003, Hu Xiaoyi, spokesman for the Ministry of Labour and Social Security revealed at a press conference Tuesday.

Hu also said that the recorded number of unemployed was 8.27 million in urban areas, with a -0.1 percent growth rate compared with 2003. This was the first time that the unemployment rate has shown a declining trend in the last ten years.

Although the number of laid off workers at the end of 2004 was less than that of 2004, there are still 1.53 million laid-off workers in China.

Since 1998, the government has been releasing funds for laid-off workers and establishing re-employment centers. With the improving of the unemployed insurance system, the government stopped setting up new re-employment centers and newly laid-off staff will benefit from the unemployed insurance instead of the basic fund money.

# Roof Gardens a New Science in Shanghai

By Pan Hao

The Shanghai Landscape Administration Bureau says its research and development department is directing its efforts to roof landscaping for buildings in Shanghai.

The research is aimed at reducing infrared radiation from the surface of buildings, and also to reduce air pollution and carbon dioxide levels, as well as enhancing the appearance of the city.

According to the bureau, the research is progressing well so far. Roof landscaping has been possibly on buildings constructed after 1980, which have sufficient construction strength and are solid enough to support the additional weight, and most importantly have adequate water-proofing.

# Local Employees Receive Maternity Insurance

By Pan Hao

The Beijing Government has issued a regulation stating that local employees are entitled to maternity leave and insurance, effective from July 1 this year.

According to the regulation, enterprises are obliged to purchase maternity insurance for all staff with Beijing residency permits. A maternity fund will be used to cover expenses arising during the maternity period.

According to Wang Dexu, vice-chairman of the Beijing Labor and Social Security Bureau, the new regulation will not increase staff costs due to the unification of charge fees of hospitals controlled by the government. The new regulation will benefit some 27,000 local employees.



# Bank of China Says Fraud Case Not to Derail IPO Plan

By Sun Yongjian

The Bank of China has recently been beset by a high-profile embezzlement case in northeast China, but the bank on Monday assured the market that the events would not affect its plans to go public in 2005.

Police in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province and the bank confirmed on January 24 that 600 million yuan in deposits at the Bank of China branch in Harbin had vanished and branch president Gao Shan had disappeared as well, *China Business News* reported on January 27.

"The fraud case, which involves hundreds of millions of yuan and several companies including Shanghai-listed Northeast Expressway Co. has

been under investigation and will have no impact on our initial public offering later this year," bank spokesman Wang Zhaowen said at a Monday press conference in Beijing.

Wang did not give more specific information on the amount of money or the number of firms involved.

The lost money belonged to Northeast Expressway and one of its subsidiaries as well as a high-tech investment company called Chenneng, *China Business News* said. Chenneng General Manager Zhao Qingbin committed suicide on January 13, the report said, without further explaining the circumstances of his death.

Bank of China President Li Lihui personally went to Harbin to participate in the investigation of the fraud

case, it said.

Gao Shan was still at large and had been put on a nationwide police wanted list, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported on Tuesday.

"This is a case of fraud committed by a conspiracy to use banking business bills between people inside and outside the bank," Wang Zhaowen said.

When interviewed by *Beijing Today* by telephone on Wednesday, Wang affirmed speculation in the domestic media that a person named Li Dongzhe, who reportedly worked at Beijing-based Beijing Century Greenland Investment Co., was involved in the case.

"Besides Century Greenland, some other companies have got involved," he said.

In order to prevent such crimes in the future, Bank of China was preparing to establish a new section based on its current auditing and inspection departments to oversee internal supervision and efficiency, Wang added.

"We should draw lessons from this case. Presidents of bank branches have been given too much power," Zhong Wei, head of the Financial Research Institute of Beijing Normal University told the *News Morning Post* on Tuesday.

"The bank's inner control system should be strengthened, meaning a vertical administrative system that responds directly to the board should be constructed as soon as possible," he was quoted as saying.

The China Banking Regulatory Commission posted a statement on its website on Monday saying that the fraud case at the Bank of China sub-branch in January exposed serious problems with the bank's branch administration and risk control.

In the statement, the commission urged the Bank of China to conduct its investigation as quickly as possible and impose stiff penalties on the criminals involved.

## Domestic Search Engine Planning US IPO

By Sun Yongjian

China Internet search engine firm Baidu is seeking an initial public offering (IPO) in the US in 2005 with a goal of attracting \$200 million in financing, the *International Financial Report* said on Wednesday.

Baidu is one of the most popular Web search sites in China, a fast-growing, untapped region for Internet businesses that has caught the attention of investors and the world's most popular Internet companies such as eBay, Yahoo and Google, the report said.

The company said it had lined up famed investment banks Credit Suisse and Goldman Sachs as guarantors but did not reveal other details of the IPO plan, the newspaper said.

An unnamed source was quoted as saying Baidu would likely choose Nasdaq or the New York Stock Exchange as the forum for its public offering.

## CITIC Prudential Gets Group Life Insurance License

By Xie Lixue

CITIC Prudential announced on Monday that it has been awarded a license by the China Insurance Regulatory Commission to sell group life insurance policies in the rapidly growing Chinese market.

The 50-50 life insurance joint venture between CITIC and Prudential, established in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province in October 2003, should begin offering group life insurance products in the second quarter of 2005.

"This new license for group life insurance complements the company's rapid geographic expansion in China. We are confident CITIC Prudential will continue its impressive track record of growth and look forward to more positive developments in 2005," CITIC Group Vice Chairman Wang Chuan said.

Mark Norbom, chief executive of Prudential Corp Asia said, "We are committed to meeting more of the savings, protection and investment needs of the Chinese people and this license will allow us to offer large numbers of new customers our high quality products and services."

CITIC Prudential was the first Sino-British life insurance joint venture and is already among the top five providers in the Guangzhou market in terms of new business.

In August 2003, CITIC Prudential launched their second operation in Beijing, and in September 2004 their third in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province. One month later, CITIC Prudential was awarded a life insurance license for Shanghai.

CITIC Prudential's Shanghai branch is expected to open for business in the first quarter of this year.

## China Aviation Oil Opens Dialog with Creditors

By Sun Yongjian

China Aviation Oil (Singapore) Corp (CAO) began negotiations with its creditors on Monday, the *Beijing News* reported on Tuesday and company spokesman Gerald Woon confirmed.

The negotiations would mainly focus on the issues of CAO's scheme for restructuring and reducing its liabilities through debt payments and the final results would be announced on June 10, Woon said.

Late last month, CAO revealed a restructuring scheme to handle its enormous debts, stating that \$100 million in upfront cash payments, comprising \$70 million from fresh equity and \$30 million from existing assets, would be made to creditors.

But that plan could be amended in accordance with the final results of the negotiations, Woon said.

The struggling company has been meeting one-on-one with creditors to explain its liability restructuring plan and seek suggestions, he added.

CAO acknowledged last December that it had amassed \$550 million in debts from speculative oil derivative trading.

## UnionPay Cardholders Can Charge in Hong Kong

By Pan Hao

China UnionPay last Friday announced cooperation deals with HSBC Bank and Hang Seng Bank of Hong Kong to allow UnionPay cardholders to withdraw cash from ATM machines operated by the two banks in the special administration region.

Hang Seng Bank (Hong Kong) said in a statement that as of that day, UnionPay cardholders could withdraw up to 4,500 yuan daily from its more than 400 ATM machines and enjoy other services such as balance checking. The bank would not charge fees for those services, though China UnionPay may levee some changes to cardholders, Hang Seng spokesman Gao Yugui said.

Aside from ATM machines set up by China UnionPay in the mainland, the company's customers can now use their cards in more than 2,000 ATMs in Hong Kong.

## Airbus Confirms China Order of Five A380 Superjumbos

By Chu Meng

A top executive of France-based Airbus confirmed in Beijing yesterday that China Southern Airlines had ordered five 555-seat double-decker Airbus A380 passenger planes in Paris last Saturday.

Laurence Barron, senior vice president of Airbus Corp and president of Airbus China, told *Beijing Today* yesterday, "The massive transaction will be worth some \$1.4 billion according to catalogue prices.

"The delivery date of the first two A380 planes will be the end of 2007, in order to guarantee supply for the heavy market demand of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The other three planes will be delivered by the end of 2008 or in 2009."

Barron added that Air China had also begun negotiations to buy two A380 passenger planes for use on its international routes.

He said that since the debut of the new A380 freight aircraft, orders had already come in from FedEx, UPS and Lufthansa, but not from any Chinese cargo carriers.

"China will need about \$200 billion worth of new airliners in the next 20 years as the annual growth rate of China's aviation industry will top the world at 7.3 percent," he said. "We predict that China will order at least 1,300 airplanes for its arterial lines in the coming 20 years, including 100 or more A380 aircraft."



Laurence Barron

Photo by Tian Yufeng

## China Buys 60 Boeing 787 Dreamliners

By Pan Hao

China Aviation Supplies Import and Export Group Corp signed an order with Boeing last Friday to purchase 60 Boeing 787 Dreamliner, or 7E7, passenger aircraft in a deal worth \$7.2 billion.

The planes will be allocated to six domestic carriers upon delivery.

Air China, China Eastern Airlines and China Southern Airlines will each take command of 15 787s, Shanghai Airlines will get five, Hainan Airlines seven and the last three will go to Xiamen Airlines.

The purchase announcement came shortly after the Chinese company placed an order for five of Boeing rival Airbus' new A380 twin-deck superjumbo jets.

Boeing has said that production of the 787 will begin in 2006, first flights are scheduled for 2007 and delivery and start of service should begin in 2008.

The Dreamliner should have a cruising speed of Mach 0.85 and offer big-jet range in a mid-size plane. China is a huge market for Boeing and more than 3,500 Boeing airplanes – one third of its world fleet – carry major parts and assemblies built in China.

## SAIC Takes Over Ssangyong

By Sun Yongjian

The deal between Shanghai Automotive Industry Corp (SAIC), one of China's leading vehicle producers, and South Korean automaker Ssangyong Motors signed in Seoul last October became reality on January 27, *China Economic Times* said on Tuesday.

SAIC, the main joint venture partner of the US' General Motors and Germany's Volkswagen, acquired a controlling 48.9 percent stake in debt-laden Ssangyong for a price of some 590 billion Korean won (\$500 million).

A conference of Ssangyong's shareholders was held on Tuesday and the carmaker's new charter was approved and changes made to its board of directors, the report said.

Wang Young Nam, former vice president of Daewoo Motors, and Kim Seung Un, former vice president of Ssangyong Motors, were named external directors of the carmaker.

Zheng Mingyi, president of China State Construction Engineering Corp's South Korea branch and Zheng Zhuzhi, vice president of the Industry and Commerce Bank of China in Seoul were elected members of Ssangyong's auditing commission, the paper said.

The deal makes SAIC the first Chinese automaker to have a controlling interest in a foreign vehicle firm, it said.

In late 2002, SAIC paid \$59.7 million to buy a 10 percent stake in GM's venture in South Korea, GM Daewoo Automotive & Technologies Co., in the first overseas acquisition by a Chinese carmaker.

The company is also reportedly in talks with the UK's MG Rover to make a joint acquisition of the car operations in Poland left by South Korea's bankrupt Daewoo Motors.

All of Ssangyong's workers will keep their jobs and SAIC will invest in the South Korean company to expand its production capacity, according to a memorandum of understanding the two sides signed in July.

## Merill Lynch Buys Into Chinese Property Firm

By Sun Yongjian

Merill Lynch & Co. signed an investment agreement with Beijing Yintai Property Co. on Wednesday, signaling the American company's entry into China's booming real estate market, *Beijing News* reported on Thursday.

One of the world's leading international financial management and advisory companies, Merrill Lynch would purchase shares in Beijing Yintai for \$300 million, the report said.

The American company would have status as an investor and operator of a joint venture real estate project when the agreement went through, though the timing could be strained because of the central government's efforts to limit real estate development to cool the overheating national economy, it said.

Beijing Yintai General Manager Shen Guojun told the newspaper the transaction would be done in cash and the domestic side would

maintain holding status of the joint venture project.

"This is a pilot investment," Kenny Tse, a real estate analyst with Morgan Stanley, was quoted as saying by the *Wall Street Journal* on Thursday.

Domestic real estate companies were more willing to work with foreign financial firms because the Chinese government was limiting the loans they could get from domestic banks, Tse said.

## Temasek Tapping Domestic Gas Market

By Annie Wei

Temasek Holdings of Singapore has reached an understanding for one of its subsidiaries to acquire up to 10 percent of China Gas Holdings, extending the Singaporean firm's investment in the Chinese mainland's burgeoning gas market.

China Gas Holdings is listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and its businesses cover investing in gas and gas pipelines inside China.

China Gas also agreed to establish a gas management and service

joint venture company in China in which it would hold a 49 percent stake and City Gas, the Temasek Holdings subsidiary, a 51 percent share. The two sides also agreed to cooperate in investing in other natural gas projects in this country.

China Gas was granted a 30-year license to operate pipeline and gas business in the Jiangbei District of Nanjing on January 20, the *China Business Daily* reported on Monday.

On January 11, China Gas

## High Demand for Top-end Offices in 2004

By Chu Meng

Three times more grade A office space was absorbed in 2004 than in the previous year as a result of multinational corporations' recognition of China's standing by its World Trade Organization commitments, Jones Lang LaSalle said in its latest Greater China Property Index released on Monday.

Market sectors including the insurance, automobile, financial and telecom fields have been driving demand for grade A office space, the real estate consulting

company said.

Despite new completions in the grade A office market, Beijing's overall vacancy rate decreased slightly in 2004 and the overall vacancy rate for the high-end residential market decreased to 23 percent from 26 percent in the fourth quarter.

Residential supply continued to increase, while demand remained strong and more foreigners and overseas Chinese bought into high-end properties in anticipation of an appreciation of the renminbi, Jones

Lang LaSalle said. About 35 percent of villa purchases were for investment, 20 percent for a second home, and the remaining 45 percent for both self-occupation and investment, it estimated.

In 2005, the market looks to remain active and rents of grade A office space should increase marginally in the second half of the year until new supply in the market took effect, the report said. Continued strong demand from MNCs should be the key driver of demand.



January 30, (USA Today) – In a US\$57 billion stock deal that will marry two consumer-product global giants, Procter & Gamble announced late Thursday that it will buy Gillette in its largest-ever acquisition.

The merger, which must still be approved by regulators and shareholders, would create a company with revenue of more than \$60 billion that would have greater clout against mass-market retailers like Wal-Mart Stores, which have been pressuring consumer product suppliers to keep costs low. Both companies' boards unanimously approved the deal.

P&G Chairman and CEO A.G. Lafley flew to New York to discuss the deal with Wall Street analysts Friday, along with Gillette CEO Jim Kilts.

They said the combination would bring together the marketing and distribution strengths of P&G, whose products are marketed largely to women, with Gillette's high-profit brands like razors, which are marketed mainly to men.

As part of the cost-cutting that would follow the deal, executives said the merger would result in elimination of about 6,000 jobs, or 4% of the combined work force of about 140,000.

Kilts will become vice chairman of P&G and join its board. He said the combination would give Gillette opportunities to sell its products in developing markets including China and East Europe.

The deal will add Gillette razors, Duracell batteries, Oral-B toothbrushes and Right Guard deodorant to P&G's current roster, which includes such consumer icons as Tide deter-

# P&G Buy Gillette

gent, Crest toothpaste and Pampers diapers. The deal will create \$14 billion to \$16 billion in value from cost cuts and new revenue. And it should spur the sale of P&G and Gillette products in China, Russia and Turkey.

## Analyst's Take:

*The purchase of Gillette will give Procter & Gamble a more balanced portfolio. Although some of Gillette's and Procter & Gamble's products compete head to head for shelf-space, particularly in deodorants and oral hygiene, the two companies have also targeted very different areas of the market. The mainstay of Gillette is its razors and male grooming personal care products. Procter & Gamble has*

*previously focused on women's personal care lines such as Olay, and Cover Girl, but the acquisition will give it expanded presence in men's grooming.*

*Both companies market mass brands in the usual distribution channels such as supermarkets and pharmacies. Retail distribution is likely to remain unaffected in this respect. However, Procter & Gamble's strengths will allow it to develop Gillette's brands in China and Japan as well as countries in Eastern Europe.*

*Procter & Gamble's greater presence will be most notable in China and Japan. Here Procter & Gamble will be able to use its distribution network, built on the strength of its hair care brands, to expand the Gillette range.*

*Concerning the impact that the acquisition can bring to other companies, the L'Oréal Group will lose its top spot in the global cosmetics and toiletries industry and could take over one of its competitors as a response to the acquisition; and Procter & Gamble and Gillette are likely to have to drop a series of brands from oral hygiene and deodorants because of anti-trust rulings mainly in the US. Colgate-Palmolive might look to pick up brands in these sectors, particularly deodorants.*

*According to Euromonitor's latest data, Procter & Gamble is ranked second in the global Cosmetics and Toiletries industry, and holds a 9% market share. The sectors that make the most money for Procter & Gamble include Color Cosmetics, Oral Hygiene, Skin Care and Fragrances.*

**– Alexandra Richmond, cosmetics and toiletries news analyst for Euromonitor, London office**  
**(Wei Ying)**



A group of zebras drink some water in Tsavo National Park, the biggest wild zoo in Kenya. The tourism industry in Kenya has made great progress, earning 42.1 billion Kenyan shilling (about US\$526 million) for the country in 2004.

Xinhua Photo

# New Policy to Combat Corruption and Bribery

Davos, Switzerland, January 28 (weforum.org) – In a collaborative move to fight corruption and bribery, 62 corporate leaders from the energy, engineering & construction, and mining & metals sectors have committed to supporting the Partnering Against Corruption Principles for Countering Bribery (PACI Principles).

The PACI Principles are derived from Transparency International's Business Principles for Countering Bribery and call for two fundamental actions: a zero-tolerance policy towards bribery, and the development of a practical and effective implementation program.

## Analyst's Take:

*The globalization of business has created dramatic new imperatives for companies to take action against corruption and bribery. Corporate anti-corruption and bribery programs vary by individual company, country, region*

*and industry.*

*On one hand, corporate corruption or bribery is not necessarily associated with economic development extent of a country or region. Instead, it depends on how mature and scientific the corporation management mechanism has become in that country or region. Even if it is a well-developed country like the US, there are still scandals involving world famous corporations' senior personnel, such as at Andersen and Enron.*

*On the other hand, if we take a general view based upon our studies in recent years we could draw a conclusion that corporations from developing countries are much more likely to misconduct and engender corruption or bribery than those from developed countries. That is because the more developed a country is, the more mature and scientific its corporation mechanism is, and the longer it has had to accumulate experience and learn lessons.*

*The World Bank estimates that corruption costs the world economy about \$1.5 trillion a year and reduces countries' GDP growth rates by as much as one percentage point annually.*

*The SASAC (State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission) has aimed greater anti-corruption efforts at misconduct by high-level officials and well-connected firms. At present, the core task for SASAC is to build up a mature modern enterprise system, which separates the owner of the enterprise from the operator.*

**– Lu Tong, Head of the Institute of World Economics and Politics of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences**

# SBC Acquires AT&T

Dallas, January 31 (AP) – SBC Communications Inc. has agreed to buy former parent AT&T Corp. for US\$16 billion, creating one of America's largest communications companies and ending the independent run of a firm whose roots stretch back to the telephone's invention.

The decision followed late-night meetings by directors of SBC, the nation's second-biggest regional phone company, and the 120-year-old icon AT&T, which gave birth to SBC when its monopoly was broken up in 1984.

SBC spokesman Larry Solomon said documents in the acquisition were signed early Monday after AT&T's board of directors approved the deal. Board members of SBC approved the transaction on Sunday evening.

The acquisition is still subject to regulatory and shareholder approval. The acquisition was expected to close by the first half of 2006.

San Antonio-based SBC has about 50 million local-telephone customers, mostly in the Midwest and South. It also is a 60 percent owner of Cingular Wireless, which serves more than 46 million wireless customers.

AT&T, once known as Ma Bell, handled the nation's telephone calls before it was broken up 21 years ago. The Bedminster, N.J.-based company has nearly 30 million long-distance customers.

"Today's agreement is a huge step forward in our efforts to build a company that will lead an American communications revolution in the 21st century," Edward E. Whitacre Jr., SBC chairman and chief executive, said in a statement.

"We are combining AT&T's national and global networks and expertise with SBC's strong platforms and skills in local exchange service, wireless and broadband," he added. "It's a great combination."

"Together, SBC and AT&T will be a stronger US-based global competitor capable of delivering the advanced network technologies necessary to offer integrated, high-quality and competitively priced communications services to meet the evolving needs of customers worldwide," David W. Dorman, AT&T chairman and chief executive, said in a statement.

Shareholders of AT&T, under terms of the agreement, will receive total consideration currently valued at \$19.71 per share, or about \$16 billion. From SBC, AT&T shareholders will receive 0.77942 shares of the Texas company's common stock for each AT&T common share, in an exchange ratio equaling \$18.41 per share based on SBC's closing stock price on January 28, 2005. That amounts to about \$15 billion in stock, Solomon said.

# EU Proposes Ban on Mercury Exports

Brussels, January 31 (Reuters) – The European Union, the world's largest supplier of mercury, is set to ban exports of the metal by 2011 under new rules proposed by the EU executive Commission on Monday, continuing the fight to curtail its use worldwide.

The rules, which also seek to limit emissions, curb marketing of mercury thermometers and ensure safe storage of mercury from industrial plants, aim to reduce global supply and protect EU citizens from mercury's effects.

Mercury is used to make caustic soda, batteries, thermometers and cosmetics and pesticides. Existing EU legislation on mercury already covers emissions and limits its use in such products.

The export ban will have the greatest effect on Spain, the only country in the EU where mercury is mined. The EU supplies about one-third of global demand for mercury. The Commission hopes that cutting that amount—about 1,000 tonnes a year – out of the world market will spur development of alternatives.

# Federal Reserve Raises Rates for 6th Time

Washington, February 2 (Reuters) – The US Federal Reserve on Wednesday raised interest rates for a sixth straight time, extending a policy of gradually lifting borrowing costs to levels high enough to ward off inflation pressures.

The unanimous decision by the US central bank's policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee moves the target for the benchmark federal funds rate – which affects credit costs throughout the economy – to 2.5 percent.

In a statement after a two-day meeting, Fed officials retained an assessment that economic risks were balanced between slower growth and rising prices and said they thought they could keep raising rates at a "measured" pace.

A poll of 19 Wall Street



Alan Greenspan

primary dealers, conducted after the Fed statement was published, found them unanimously predicting another quarter percentage point rate hike at the next FOMC meeting on March 22. Eighteen foresaw an additional incremental rate rise at the following session on May 3.

# Al Jazeera Voted Top 5 Brand

London, January 30 (Reuters) – Arabic media channel Al Jazeera has been voted the world's fifth most influential brand in a poll of branding professionals that gave the top slot to the iPod and its maker, Apple.

In the survey of almost 2,000 ad executives, brand managers and academics by online magazine Brandchannel, Apple, whose iPod has replaced Sony's Walkman as the personal media player of choice ousted search engine Google from last year's top spot, but the surprise to many will be

Al Jazeera's entry into the top five.

"With all the news from Iraq and Afghanistan and the 'war on terror', a lot of people are really tuned into the news, and the major news sources have a western bias," Brandchannel Editor Robin Rusch said.

The annual survey asks respondents to rate the impact of a particular brand on people's lives, and does not attempt to quantify its financial value. Coca-Cola, for instance, is nowhere to be found in this year's global or regional top five lists.

# Federal Reserve Raises Rates for 6th Time

Los Angeles, February 2 (Reuters) – A California jury ordered Nestle USA to pay nearly \$16 million to a model whose face appeared on Taster's Choice coffee labels in 18 countries for six years without his knowledge, his lawyer said Tuesday.

Model-actor Russell Christoff, 58, had no idea of his fame among the instant java set until 2002, when a woman at a store remarked on his resemblance to the smiling man on the Taster's Choice jar, Christoff's attorney, Colin Claxon, said.

Christoff had received about \$200 for posing for test shots for Nestle Canada for a different product, but was not contacted about the coffee labels, which were redesigned to use his photo in 1997.

Last week, a Glendale, California, jury ordered Nestle USA, a division of Switzerland-based Nestle SA, to pay Christoff a \$330,000 fee plus \$15.6 million, or 5 percent, of Taster's Choice profits for the time he appeared on the label.

# Kodak to Buy Creo

Vancouver, January 31 (Forbes) – Digital imaging company Creo Inc. has agreed to a takeover worth US\$980 million in cash by Eastman Kodak Co. The deal values Vancouver-based Creo at US\$16.50 a share, a more than 12 percent increase per share.

The announcement boosted Creo stock and led dissidents, who had been trying to replace the board, to drop their campaign. "We are delighted that a world-class company such as Kodak has recognized the value we believe is inherent in Creo's business," said

Robert Burton of Burton Capital Management, one of the dissidents.

Creo provides software used by printers to manage the movement of text, graphics and images from the computer screen to the printing press. Kodak said the acquisition will modestly dilute its earnings for the remainder of 2005, but reaffirmed its operational earnings guidance range of \$2.60 to \$2.90 per share for the year. For 2006, Kodak expects that Creo will add at least 5 cents per share to its operating earnings, through cost savings and revenue growth.





Beijing's Gaobeidian Stilt Team was set up in 1886.

Photo by Wang Zhenlong

## Walking Tall into London

By Tian Yuan

The Beijing Tourism Administration will send six local performance groups to London on February 11 to celebrate Spring Festival with the people of England's capital in big, open-air parties.

Among the troupes is the established Beijing Gaobeidian Stilt Team, which will participate in a Chinese culture show on Charing Cross Road.

Despite their historic pedigree, the team defies strict tradition by putting 14 performers on stage at one time instead of the more standard 12. Perched on meter-high stilts, the performers act out different dramatic roles and perform stunts like jumping off a platform 13 steps high.

"We are trying our best to get ready for the show, which we hope will attract many people. Another part of our event will be a show of traditional Chinese furniture, since Gaobeidian is emerging as a center of that industry in Beijing," team leader Zhi Fen told the *China Times*.

Other elements of the London performances will include Peking opera, acrobatics, Chinese cooking and a fashion show. The activity is intended to represent the historic and modern faces of Beijing and promote the 2008 Olympic Games.

## Police Bust Big Gambling Web

by Tian Yuan

Beijing police have arrested two men in connection to an Internet gambling case involving 235 million yuan, but one suspect remains at large.

The police uncovered details of the case on Tuesday and quickly apprehended local men Yang Yi and Jia Dong, while the suspected ring leader, surnamed Huang has not been located.

On December 23 last year, the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau got a tip that an Internet user in a community in Chaoyang District was regularly logging on to Xinbao, a gambling web site operated out of Taiwan. Homeowner Yang Yi, 38, was confirmed to be the user of the Internet connection number and he was captured red handed on January 10 placing a wager on a European Champions League match.

Further investigations uncovered Huang, who lived next door to Yang, was a top agent for the gambling site in the Chinese mainland with more than 10 subordinate agents under his control. But when police went to arrest Huang and his wife, the pair was outside China on vacation.

The same day, another person in Changping District was found using Huang's name and password to log on to the gambling Web site. Jia Dong, 40, was arrested on January 11 at his father-in-law's house in Niuji, Xuanwu District.

Huang and Jia used the account to place more than 95,000 wagers of 1,000 yuan to 50,000 yuan each, the total sum of which reached some 235 million yuan. That made them the biggest agents yet found in the gambling net case in the Chinese mainland.

Police have speculated Huang likely earned more than 1 million yuan per month because of his network and because he could rig the games to reduce his risks.

Incidents of betting on football matches in China's Super League have also been uncovered in the Xinbao case. Police were still investigating whether any domestic players were involved, a police source told the *Beijing Evening Post*.

# Capital On Guard against Meningitis



Hundreds of people lined up to get Meningitis inoculations at the Beijing Municipal Center for Disease Control and Prevention on Wednesday.

Photo by Jia Ting

By Li Ruifen

Nearly 1,000 people were inoculated with meningitis vaccine in Beijing on Thursday, the first day in a citywide campaign to ward off the disease since a breakout killed 16 across China in January.

Middle school students and people from outside the city would be given priority in receiving injections, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported.

Vaccines capable of preventing both group A and C meningitis were flown to the capital on Tuesday evening and local health authorities had already stockpiled enough vaccine to inject more than 300,000 people, the newspaper said.

Beijing residents can go to

the Beijing Municipal Center for Disease Control and Prevention, major local hospitals or appointed injection centers in every district and county to receive inoculations. A hotline, 6428 7788, has been set up to provide people free information on the campaign.

On Tuesday, the Beijing Board of Health announced that no cases of group C meningitis infections had been reported in the capital, but as of February 1, two patients infected with group A meningitis were still receiving treatment at local hospitals.

However, the fact there had not been any group C cases for a long time did not indicate people in Beijing were

actually immune to the potentially deadly disease, the local health organization said.

More than 258 people have been infected with meningitis and 16 died in China as of January 31 since a breakout began in Anhui last month. Anhui alone saw 62 confirmed cases and six deaths of the disease in January, according to state provided information.

Cerebral-spinal meningitis is an acute infectious disease that spreads through the respiratory system, which can lead to death in 24 hours. The main symptoms include fever, headache, ache, angina and coughing. Because its symptoms are similar to those of common colds, meningitis is easily ignored.

This Monday, the Ministry of Health released an emergency notice on its website stressing the importance of preventing and controlling meningitis in every province and area of China. With Spring Festival and the annual holiday travel spree approaching, railway authorities around the country are carefully sanitizing carriages and taking other measures to prevent possible infection on packed trains during the festival season, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported on Tuesday.

"There is no need to panic, because this disease is controllable and people infected can be cured," Ministry of Health official Deng Haihua was quoted as saying.

## Residents Fighting the Power

By Chu Meng

A highly charged situation came to a head on Monday when 200 workers from Beijing Electric Power Corp. forced their way into a public field near the Summer Palace and erected a high voltage power line that has sparked anger from nearby residents and been called illegal by local authorities.

As *Beijing Today* first reported on August 20 last year, the 220-kilovolt power line, which runs from the Summer Palace north through the Baiwangjiyuan residential community, is part of the northwest Beijing electrical network project begun in February 2004 by Beijing Electric.

Community residents have loudly protested the building of several towers in the field inside Baiwangjiyuan's borders and the more potentially dangerous stringing of the high-voltage line over residential buildings.

"Electromagnetic radiation from the power lines can be very harm-

ful to people. We call on the government to take down the towers and bury the lines underground so that people will not be at risk," Wu Zhenping, a representative of the community told *Beijing Today* Wednesday.

Last August, the Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau held a public hearing on the matter and concluded that the power line project was illegal because it had not gone through necessary environmental impact assessments.

The People's Court of Haidian District ruled against Beijing Electric on the matter in December 2004 and ordered the company to stop construction of the project.

However, the environmental protection bureau's first report issued two months after the hearing gave approval to the project, leading Baiwangjiyuan residents to file for an official administrative reconsideration. Results of that reconsideration have yet to be issued.

## Forbidding City Seeking New Symbol

By Lu Xiaonan

Six potential new symbols of Beijing's Forbidden City were posted on its Web site, www.dpm.org.cn, in order to solicit public opinion on which should become the official new icon of the famed site. People are welcome to voice their views on the emblems and pick their favorites until February 15, the National Palace Museum administration office announced on Sunday.

A source from the museum told Xinhua that the icon search was an important part of the activities to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the National Palace

Museum this year and a good way to build the Forbidden City's domestic and international reputation.

"The correct symbol should incorporate both historic and modern elements of this World Heritage Site," Feng Naien, director of the National Palace Museum, told *Beijing Daily Messenger* when the symbol search was first publicized last year.

The museum received nearly 2,800 design proposals and a committee then sorted through them to chose the best six. The creator of the final icon would receive an award of 80,000 yuan, a museum source told Chinanews.com.



Some people fear the anti-theft devices drop with enough force to possibly break passengers' legs.

Photo by Li Yang

## Barring Cab Theft in Changchun

By Tian Yuan

A group of 20 taxi cabs in Changchun, Jilin Province were equipped with anti-theft devices on January 6 to protect their drivers from the threat of having their cars or valuables stolen. But not everyone is taken with the machines, which can render car thieves helpless in less than one second, and some drivers have already removed them from their cabs.

Taxis in Beijing and Shenzhen have long used metallic cages and other theft-protection methods, but this new device represents fresh technology invented by a group of mechanical engineering graduate students at Tsinghua University.

"This device is positioned between the driver's seat and passenger seats like a fence," Mr. Yang, general manager of Changchun Dingtai Vehicle Defense Co. and one of the inventors of the device, said.

"A button on the driver's side is connected directly to the car's electrical system. Once the button is activated, an arm quickly extends down the legs of passengers in the back seat, pinning them there."

Yang noted that his team conducted professional testing of the product during development and they had applied for a patent.

Though taxi drivers may welcome the defensive measure, some people have spoken out against it for posing potential danger to passengers. The heavy pressure exerted by the bar could be strong enough to break bones, some say.

Another argument against the devices is that they are affronts to passengers' dignity by implying that everyone who gets in the armed cabs is a suspected thief.

The negative public impression of the devices led several drivers to remove them from their cars within one week of installation, since passengers were reluctant to get in.

## Community Center Provides Convicts Second Chances

By Liu Zhaoxi

The first registered community correction center in Beijing was set up on Saturday in the Xinjiekou community in Xicheng District.

Tang Guoying, head of the correction center told *Beijing Today* the facility would work with convicted law offenders, including those under probation, released on parole and serving sentences outside prison under surveillance.

In cooperation with other related institutions, the center will provide psychological testing of the convicts and consultation services based on the test results. Through involving convicts in public welfare activities, educating them on the law and other means, the center hopes to help them correct their bad behavior patterns.

The center can also help people recently released from prison find jobs or places to live.

Community correction is not new in Beijing, but the center marks the first time an independent organization has been set up to handle the task. Because it was an organization and not just a department of a community administration, the center would be able to attract more social resources to get involved in community correction, Tang said.

Another 12 community correction centers are expected to be established around Beijing in the near future.



Photo by Wang Zhenlong

## Maizidian Made More Foreigner Friendly

By Lu Xiaonan

The "no language barrier community" project, intended to make foreign residents feel more at home, started in the Maizidian residential area of Chaoyang District on Tuesday.

New metal signs for bus stops, roads and taxi stands, all marked in Chinese and English, have been erected along streets in the community.

"We have also recruited some volunteers from all over the area and of different ages to take weekly English lessons,

not only so they will improve their foreign language skills but also so they can help foreigners in trouble," Sun Shouying, an official from Maizidian's administration office told *Beijing Today*.

Sun said the "no language barrier" project was first adopted by the Zaoyuan Nanli community in late January and was scheduled to spread across Maizidian over the next two months.

There are currently 7,848 foreign residents in the Maizidian area, accounting for 20 percent of the local population, a rate far higher than the five percent average in Beijing.

The project has drawn praise from Chinese and foreign residents.

"I feel like I'm home," Ronald, an Australian software engineer who has lived in Maizidian for half a year told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday. "Though the signs cannot be found everywhere, I can still use the ones that are up."



By Wang Fang

Tian Liang, one of China's most popular Olympic diving champions, was expelled from the national team last Wednesday for violating state sport regulations and taking part in too many "commercial activities", Xinhua reported.

Li Hua, the director of the swimming governing body of China Sport General Administration, told Xinhua, "As an Olympic champion, Tian Liang has seriously violated the regulations of the General Administration for Sport, adversely influencing preparations for the Olympic Games."

Tian Liang, 25, has always been the diving fans' sweetheart with his heart-throb smile and handsome looks. He bagged a gold medal on the men's platform in the Sydney Olympics and won the gold medal with Yang Jinghui in the synchronized 10-metre platform and the bronze medal in the individual event at the Athens Olympics last year. Even though he lost out to teammate Hu Jia at Athens, this failure did not dent his popularity in the slightest.

He was one of 50 Olympic gold medallists who traveled to Hong Kong on a victory tour last August.

Li Hua was quoted as saying to Xinhua, "Time is limited and the task of preparing for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games is heavy. Athletes should wholeheartedly devote themselves to it. Tian asked for a half-year leave after the Athens Olympic Games, which was approved. However, he then indulged in a series of commercial activities and did not get approval from the sports authorities. We hope the administration of the team can be strengthened through this case, especially the administration of excellent and top athletes."

Tian signed a contract with Emperor Entertainment Group, a Hong Kong-based artist management and entertainment production company, in December last year.

**Tian Liang**, Olympic gold medallist: **I am upset** (from Xinhua)

When I heard the news that I was no longer a member of the national team, I was shocked. I am very upset.

The national team is like my home where I grew up. I have been living in this family for more than 13 years since 1993. I love this family and I am grateful to my coach and the leaders of our team.

Even though I am not in the national team, diving is still my career and I will continue to train as much as necessary. In the meantime, I won't stop trying to get back into the national team.

In 2005, my training focus is the 10th national games. I will try my best to win the gold medal. For sure, my ultimate goal is the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. It will be my honor to work for my country.

With regard to joining the Emperor Entertainment Group, I have reported and communicated with the relevant leaders working in the governing section.

It matters to me whether my coach is also employed by the national team. Mr. Zhang Ting has been my coach since I became a professional sportsman. I hope one day that I can return to the national team and my coach can come back with me. I also wish to take part in 2008 Beijing Olympic Games to represent China.

**Li Hua**, director of the swimming governing body of China Sport General Administration: **the door of the national team is not closed for Tian Liang**

The door of the national team is always open to excellent sportsmen. After the Athens Olympic Games, the national diving team returned to Beijing at the end of August and on October 31, they started their

# Tian Liang Expelled



Tian Liang: I am upset.  
Photo by Xinhua

winter training. However, Tian Liang did not return to Beijing as required. The reason he provided was that he needed a rest of half a year due to his physical exertions. After consulting with the national team, Shannxi sports bureau, where Tian Liang is registered, and Shannxi diving team, we agreed that Tian could participate in the training with Shannxi diving team and we also gave him a list of requirements that he should comply with.

However, Tian did not meet our requirements. We have talked with him several times, hoping that as a national team member he could pay attention to his own image. But this did not work.

**Zhou Jihong**, the leader of the national diving team: **it depends on Tian himself whether he can come back to the national team**

It is pretty much the first time that a team member has been expelled from the national Chinese diving team. It is a very severe punishment. However, this does not mean that Tian will be expelled forever. It depends on himself whether he can come back to the national team.

We have a series of strict management rules and everyone in the team must obey them. An excellent sportsman should act as an example for young fans.

**Liu Ning**, a law student with Beijing University: **there should be more contracts**

I was thinking of the famous soccer star David Beckham. The number of commercial activities David Beckham is involved in must far outweigh the ones Tian Liang has approached.

In fact, the national diving team allows sportsmen to get involved in some commercial activities as long as they get permission. However, it is not easy to define the permission since it is a very uncertain and subjective idea.

It is not fair if the national team does not sign a contract with its sportsmen. For example, European national soccer teams are not entitled to use the image of an individual player.

It is time for the national team to think about a new way to treat the relationship between its sportsmen and market demands. If it is not solved, more cases like that of Tian Liang will appear.

**Bai Yansong**, famous CCTV host: **a new mechanism to govern both the sportsmen and the national team is required**

Tian Liang's case revealed certain malpractices such as ignoring the development of sportsmen in a commercial sense, the lack of contracts and the weight given to personal influence. I'd prefer to believe Tian Liang's demotion is because of the current backward mechanism of dealing with sportsmen in the national team cannot keep up with the market, as more and more sportsmen become involved in commercial activities.

The leaders should understand that it is impossible to hold their sportsmen back from participating in commercial activities in this market economy. They have a ready example, Yao Ming, to learn from. The internationalized management of Yao makes him more and more famous and he has made a profit. In contrast, the sports administration body does not take into account the commercial profits that Liu Xiang, Guo Jingjing and Tian Liang can bring back; they only think about how to punish them when they breach the regulations a little bit.

**George W. Bush**. He pledged to confront governments that promote terror and pursue weapons of mass destruction and hailed the success of elections in Iraq as proof of democracy's march.

"We all know that the United States cannot stay in Iraq indefinitely and continue to be viewed as an occupying force. Neither should we slip out the back door, falsely declaring victory but leaving chaos. We have never heard a clear plan from this administration for ending our presence in Iraq," said House Minority Leader **Nancy Pelosi** of California, in response to Bush's State of the Union address.

(Edited by Lene Chou)

By Zhou Ying

Li Tong, an 18-year-old student from Changchun, Jilin Province, opened a free hotline at his home on October 23 last year offering counselling for young people who are confused or uncertain about sexual matters.

The hot line has proved so popular among students that he has received more than 1,000 calls over the past three months. Now, more than twenty college students have volunteered to help Li maintain the hotline.

However, the idea has aroused some less favorable responses from people in all kinds of fields. Some think that Li's behavior is totally irresponsible. Most people have asked how an 18-year-old student, who probably hasn't had too much experience with girls, can be qualified to educate others.

Sex has always been something of a taboo subject in China, and it is still hard for teachers and parents to talk to their children and students about it. However, the increasing development of globalization and information access has brought knowledge and discussion about sex a little more into the open.

According to a report in *People's Daily* last year, more than half of the high school students in Beijing regard sex before marriage as acceptable

**Tong is not qualified for psychological consultation**

I am afraid that I hold a negative attitude towards this hot line.

A person who offers to talk to people about sex should acquire enough scientific knowledge. Ordinary psychological doctors have to get the right certificates before getting a position. Therefore in my opinion, Li Tong is not qualified to offer this kind of psychological consultation.

He has to realize that to provide knowledge about sex to people is quite different from chatting with them, because you have to be responsible to your clients. If he himself has wrong ideas about sex or related matters, it is quite possible that he will misguide others. He may have a bad influence on the consultants rather than helping them.

There is no doubt that the education on sex in our country is backward. However, we should not react by jumping to an extreme. It is a serious topic, not something to talk about the way we talk about the weather.

**Yan Wu**, vice minister of the publicity department of the Institute of Sexual Health: **what Li Tong has done is really a pioneering idea**

I have attended a sex education class in a high school. The teacher lacked proper professional knowledge and he just told the students to



Li Tong at his office

Photo by Xu Jiajun

## Let's Talk About Sex

behaviour, and apparently 9.9 percent of them think there's nothing wrong with one-night stands.

So it seems young people are increasingly open minded. But experts are worried that if they should pick up dubious concepts or information about sex, they could be led down the wrong path. So how should students be educated about sex?

**Li Tong**, founder of the hot line: **the current sex education in schools misleads students**

I used to work in a bar so I have some experience, and I really feel that there are many students of my age already living together with their boyfriends or girlfriends.

There was an exhibition about sex culture in Changchun city in October last year. I noticed that few young people visited it. Some visitors even gave me a weird look when they saw me at the exhibition. This showed that not only do students not pay attention to sex education, but that society does not have enough tolerance towards this issue.

I know a lot of people who are frustrated about sex and I want to give them a hand.

The current sex education in schools is so backward that it misleads students. Their desire for knowledge can not be fulfilled at school, so they seek porn websites, or blue movies. Therefore, I think it is necessary to open a hotline for them where they can confide their private affairs.

**Zheng Xiaohua**, professor from Changchun Mental Health Research Center: **Li**

read the books on their own, rather than guiding them in a scientific way. Moreover, in some schools, they do not even have a teacher, or a class or books for this subject.

Viewing this issue from the popularization of knowledge about sex, I think what Li Tong has done is really a pioneering work. I have chatted with this boy, and I found that he is smart enough to have acquired knowledge about sex from books, even though he hasn't done it yet. I totally believe that he has the ability to guide his peers.

**Liu Baoqing**, freelance writer: **we should applaud Li for what he is doing**

In my opinion, there is no need to hold a disapproving attitude about this boy opening a sex hotline.

Firstly, compared with the experts who specialize in sexual behavior, Li's advantage is that he can identify with the people who call up; he can understand their language and psychology. He can talk with them about the same problems that they may confront. This allows him to be closer to the people seeking help.

Secondly, I reckon that most people who call up are not really asking for professional sex advice; instead they just want to share their thoughts with somebody. For young people in school, what they really need is to open up about their psychological confusion.

We should see that the launch of the hotline is really a good start for sex education in China. This kind of education is just a blind field for students today. Why should we not give the boy credit for what he is doing?

"The Holy Father is grateful for the prayers of the faithful and of all those who love him. I think this closeness means a lot to him," said **Papal spokesman Navarro-Valls** after Pope John Paul II was being treated Wednesday for respiratory problems in Rome's Gemelli Polyclinic.

"I'm very proud and happy this morning. I congratulate all the Iraqi people and call them to vote for Iraq," said Iraqi President **Ghazi al-Yawer** after he voted at the country's first free election in a half-century on Sunday. His wife, Nesreen Mustafa Berwari, a minister of public works in the country's interim government, voted shortly afterwards. "This is a shining day on the road to the new

Iraq," she said.

"Steps should be taken immediately to restore democratic freedoms and institutions," said UN Secretary-General **Kofi Annan** in a statement calling King Gyanendra's actions in Nepal "a serious setback" that would bring neither lasting peace nor stability to Nepal. King Gyanendra dismissed the government and declared a state of emergency Wednesday, with telephone and Internet lines cut and flights diverted.

"The victory of freedom in Iraq will strengthen a new ally in the war on terror, inspire democracy reforms from Damascus to Tehran, and bring more hope and progress to a troubled region," said President



# Home Owners Besieged by Poor Property Management

By Dong Nan

The explosive growth of Beijing's real estate market has pushed the issue of property management into the limelight.

In apartment and housing developments in the capital and around China, property management companies are normally expected to take care of heating, security, sanitation, parking, repairs and other services.

But as the number of homeowners has increased, so has the number of complaints of the quality of property management services. The Beijing Consumers' Association reported that an average of 300 serious complaints about estate management companies were filed per year between 2002 and 2004.

Last month, the association released a survey on what Beijing homeowners thought of their property managers and the results show they are less than satisfied. Only 27 percent of respondents said their property management companies provided good services, while 14.3 percent called the services they received "very bad" and the rest said "just so-so." Residents of 21 of the 100 communities involved in the survey all said they were "unsatisfied with their property manager."

## Checkered past

The property management industry in China has gone through three stages of development since the 1990s, Ye Lin, a professor at the law school of Renmin University told *Beijing Today*.

Ye explained that before the 1990s, houses were usually distributed to people by government bodies or their employers as a kind of social welfare and the work unit in charge of the property handled management. Normally it took the form of administration rather than service provision.

In the early 1990s, the government shifted to commercialize real estate and severed the connection between housing and work units. At the time, property management was mostly taken care of by organizations established by local housing management bureaus, but there was little consciousness among the public about what kind of services should be provided, Ye said.

With the explosion of real estate construction in the mid-90s, professional property management companies entered the market, but the sector quickly became chaotic. Most of the management companies were set up directly by property developers and they charged high fees while providing minimal services. Homeowners had no choice but accept what they could get because they had no right nor means to change to other companies.

In fact, Chinese private residents only received the legal right to organize homeowner committees and change their property managers with the release of a government regulation in 2003. But flaws in those rules left many loopholes that property managers had continued to use to exploit residents and shirk responsibility, Ye said.

## Low quality, no transparency

In the Beijing Consumers' Association survey, 64.5 percent of homeowners said their property managers would not disclose how much money they paid to build and operate public facilities and grounds within their communities, and 72.8 percent said they had no means of supervising what property managers did with such community areas and equipment.

"That only thing property management companies are concerned about is profits," said Wang Qianhu, director of the complaints department at the China Consumers' Association. "Without proper supervision, they are sure to reduce public facilities and equipment to cut their own expenses."

Quality of service is another focus of consumer anger. Some 35 percent of respondents said they had suffered losses of property in incidents such as robberies because their property managers did not provide sufficient security. Almost 24 percent said the companies did not deliver timely home repair services and 16.8 percent described parking management in their communities as a mess.

A very frustrated 28.3 percent of those surveyed said that when problems arose, their property managers had no idea how to solve them and sometimes could not even be found to complain. Almost 12 percent griped that their property management companies expressed "outrageous" attitudes when handling conflicts with dissatisfied residents.

"The training provided to property management employees is poor and there are not enough qualified people to keep up with demand for the services," Wang said, adding he had received complaints from homeowners who had actually been beaten by their communities' guards after trying to take managers to task.

Fees are a major problem and source of resentment among residents. Some 53 percent of homeowners said



The development of property management has not kept up with Beijing's building boom.

that their property managers did not show them standards for fees charged or similar information, 47.4 percent said they only received informal receipts, not legal invoices, for fees paid, and 17.5 percent complained they faced unreasonable charges.

Hu Mizhen, a resident of the Zhonghai Yayuan community in Haidian District said she was regularly overcharged by the developer's property management firm, Zhonghai Shiji. For example, the Beijing government set a standard price of 7.5 yuan per ton of hot water, but Zhonghai Shiji charged 12 yuan per ton, she said.

By adding to set prices, Hu estimated, Zhonghai Shiji charged residents 4.28 million yuan more in property management fees and around 1.8 million yuan in winter heating fees than it should have in 2001 and 2002.

She and other furious homeowners then refused to pay the company's fees and found themselves facing a lawsuit. The case has been ongoing for more than one year and has not been resolved. "I am happy to pay property management charges, but not to Zhonghai Shiji," Hu said.

## Legal loopholes

The law passed in 2003 gave homeowners rights to set up committees to protect themselves, but 55.5 percent of the people surveyed said their communities had no such organizations.

Ye Lin said the regulations have many flaws. For example, it stipulated that homeowners should make up at least 50 of community committees, opening a window for developers to dominate any such group as the biggest effective homeowner in any complex. That watered down the committees' abilities to actually do anything to protect homeowners' interests, Ye added.

In another oversight, only residents that actually physically take part in committee meetings have legally recognized voices, meaning that people too busy to take part are ignored, even if they file written statements or complaints.

"The commercialization of housing and property management services has only come in the last few years, so many homeowners do not know how to negotiate with property managers to protect their rights effectively," Li Dongmin, director of the Social Survey Institute of China told *Beijing Today*.

Compounding the problem, the 2003 law stated homeowner committees should be registered with the "community office" at the local construction bureau, but the registration system was not sufficiently developed and proved very confusing to

many residents, Ye said.

Even committees that managed to make it through the registration process have struggled to free themselves of unqualified or poor property management firms, he added. Shady former dealings between some developers and management firms can make things even worse. In many cases, developers owe their projects' property managers large sums of money, which residents then become liable for when they want to cast off poor companies and hire new managers.

## Solution not forthcoming

"At this point, not every family is able to buy their own home, but already the rate of complaints about property management is very high. That is a dangerous trend, because property is a product that people hold on to for a long time and even pass down to their children," Li Dongmin said.

"Poor management is sure to result in the depreciation of a property's value," said lawyer Qin Bing. "The results are normally evident in less than 10 years."

The experiences of Mr. Lin, who wanted to sell his home on the South Third Ring Road and buy another place, are a case in point. Lin said he bought the apartment two years ago for 500,000 yuan because he thought the location and building quality were good. But the property management turned out to be terrible, scaring away prospective buyers and forcing him to finally settle for 400,000 yuan for the apartment.

At the end of the survey, the Beijing Consumers' Association suggested the local government pay more attention to the supervision of property management firms and urged the passage of stronger related regulations. The association also said homeowners should improve their understanding of how to protect themselves and set up community committees as soon as possible. At the same time, the survey report noted that it was a bad idea for upset homeowners to refuse to pay management fees for long stretches of time.

The Beijing government has begun to push to property management companies to file for registration and go through qualification checks. To date, of the 2,000 companies that have tried to register, 21 received first-level qualifications, 74 second level qualifications, 700 third level and the rest did not make the grade. Regulations hold that unqualified companies should fold, but many flout the law and continue to operate.

## Survey Information:

The Beijing Consumers Association survey queried 4,681 people in 100 local communities.

## Americans Warming towards China

By Dong Nan

Americans' attitudes toward China have grown dramatically more favorable in the past 10 years, according to a new poll made in the United States.

The poll was conducted by Zogby International among 203 people in leadership positions affecting public opinion, as well as 1,200 random Americans. Nearly two-thirds of respondents had a very or somewhat favorable view of China, compared to 46 percent 10 years ago. An increasing number of Americans see the relationship between the two countries improving as China moves toward a market economy. Half of those polled considered China a very important ally.

Only 12 to 15 percent considered China a serious military threat, though more than 50 percent said the country was a potential threat.

On the other hand, more than 60 percent considered China a serious and potential economic threat. And yet, 78 percent of opinion leaders and 63 percent of Americans – including 63 percent of union households – said low-cost goods from China helped the American economy. More than three-quarters said trade with China benefited the US economy, but the majority was also concerned about the impact of economic and industrial growth in China on the environment.

Half of opinion leaders and a third of Americans considered Chinese immigration good, while more than 40 percent of each group said it had no impact. Only three percent of opinion leaders and 17 percent of Americans saw Chinese immigration as a threat. (Provided by *China Daily*)

## Celebration Variations

By Li Ruifen

Four out of five Chinese people still see Spring Festival as the most important holiday of the year, a recent survey conducted by the Social Survey Institute of China indicates.

How the holiday is observed varies greatly. Just over 50 percent of respondents said they would spend Spring Festival at home, 27 percent answered they would observe tradition and visit relatives and friends and 16 percent said they would use the vacation time to travel.

Spring Festival, also known as the Lunar New Year, has for millennia been a time that Chinese take to send greetings and best wishes to their families and friends. But in this age of modern communications, how those wishes are sent has changed radically. Nearly 80 percent of the people surveyed said they would make phone calls to pay greetings, 63 percent answered they would convey their wishes by short message, 22 percent by email and only 4 percent said they would do the deed in person.

Food plays an essential part in Chinese culture and Spring Festival, when feasting is a standard part of the celebration. When asked where they would have dinner on Lunar New Year's Eve (February 8), 62 percent of respondents said they would follow custom and eat at home, while the rest chose to let restaurants do the cooking.

Despite its paramount position in the Chinese holiday line-up, many people fear Spring Festival is losing much of its charm while some seem to feel it has become quiet or uninspiring. Asked "what Spring Festival traditions need to be preserved?" 51 percent of survey participants named "exciting activities like firing firecrackers" and 32 percent choose "visiting relatives and friends".

## Survey information:

The survey was done through phone and questionnaire interviews of 2,000 people in 12 domestic cities by a research group under the Social Survey Institute of China.



Shopping centers bank of sales spikes during the festival season. Photos by Li Shu Zhuan



# Families Oblivious to Tinfoil Risks



A foil making workshop

More than 2,000 children in Zhejiang have been found to be suffering from lead poisoning in recent years, a source at Zhejiang People's Hospital in Hangzhou, capital of the province, has told Shanghai based *Xinmin Weekly*.

By Liu Zhaoxi

The lead poisoning was revealed during blood tests at the hospital. Most of these children are from small towns or villages in Zhejiang. This information prompted reporters from *Xinmin Weekly* to visit some of the villages. In January, pretending to be businessmen, they drove to the Pujiang, Lanxi and Yongkang counties near Jinhua City, where they were shocked to discover a large underground industry of family-made tinfoil paper.

## Making tinfoil

Mr. Chen, whose full name was not given, makes a living by producing tinfoil in a town in Lanxi. The raw material he uses is alloy blocks made of lead and tin. Melted, infused into models and forged, the metal turns into foil. He continues to forge the roughly made foil on a machine and then bakes it, and repeats the process many times till the foil sheets become as thin as 0.008 mm. He then distributes these ultra-thin sheets of foil - along with specially shaped yellow paper for the foil to be molded onto to create tinfoil - to hundreds of families in rural villages.

Because the foil is so thin, it has to be stuck onto the pieces of yellow paper in order to be strong enough to be used as tinfoil. This is an enormously laborious process. People place a piece of yellow paper on a flat board, then place the same-size piece of 0.008mm-thick foil on the paper, and smear it on with a steel mass tool. The foil sticks to the paper in a second. The process has to be done by hand. Because the tinfoil is so thin, picking one piece out of a pile involves blowing on it first and then delicately peeling it off with the fingers.

The tinfoil is then stuck together more firmly. From melting the alloy to the final product, there are altogether 14 steps involved. The tinfoil paper is used as paper money at funerals, something which is a widespread custom in the Yangtze River Delta area.

## Family industry

In the Jinhua area, including Pujiang and Lanxi, hundreds of families make a living by producing such paper money, and workshops can be seen everywhere in the towns and the rural villages. Family members, men and women, old and young, all participate in the production.

In a good year, Chen said he could earn about 30,000 yuan, but last year his workshop lost 20,000. As for those who smear the tinfoil on the paper, they get just nine yuan for every thousand pieces of tinfoil paper they make. If an adult works from 6am to 9pm, stopping only for lunch and dinner, he or she could finish 2,000 pieces a day.

"[The boss] never pays upon the submission of the work. They always record the debt, and always delay the payment until the end of the year," an old country lady from Pujiang, who was identified only as Wang, told *Xinmin Weekly*.

## Skin problems and worse

People working in the local tinfoil industry have found something is wrong with their skin. They experience malignant sores, which they call "tinfoil sores." Following extreme itching at first, red rashes then appear and spread across the body. The sores often get worse, running with pus and blood. Needless to say, it's painful, especially for children.

A doctor in a county hospital in Pujiang, who declined to give his name, told *Xinmin Weekly* that the malignant sores were probably a symptom of lead poisoning.

"The facts are clear: people are sure to have such sores as long as they work with tinfoil," he said. "This is the skin reaction after lead poisoning."

When heated to 400-500 degrees Celsius, lead lets off a toxic steam, which soon oxygenizes and agglutinates into dirt in the air. This can enter the human body through breathing it in or absorbing it through the skin. It causes harm to the human nervous system, brain and kidneys, and can result in behavioral changes, decline of intelligence, and kidney failure, according to *Xinmin Weekly*.

In the households the reporters visited where tinfoil production was going on, the air was suffocating with metal dirt and an unbearable smell. And the people there seldom wear facemasks, according to the magazine. Reporters could see metal dirt around the noses of the children and old people working on the tinfoil.

## Source of raw material

Chen told reporters from *Xinmin Weekly* that he purchased the raw material, the alloy, from Yongkang, a nearby county. When they went there and visited a town named Zhiyingzhen, they saw smelting plants everywhere. In addition, there were piles and piles of electronic devices that had been thrown out; tools, computers and all kinds of industrial and household waste containing tin and lead. There were also many stoves, supported by a few bricks, with hard coke burning beneath. People simply threw all the garbage into the stoves, melting off the plastics and other materials to get the metal they wanted.

The boss of one local smelting plant told *Xinmin Weekly* that it was part of her business to provide alloy for tinfoil production. Because tin has such good extensibility, it

can be forged into very thin pieces, but lead helps it to be stronger and resistant to cracking during forging, Wang Hui, a staff member at the Lanxi Disease Control Center told *Beijing Today*.

## Local government agencies: not sure what to do

Wang Hui told *Beijing Today* that the "tinfoil sores" described by *Xinmin Weekly* did not seem like a symptom of lead poisoning to him. He thought they might be caused by arsenic, another highly toxic material involved in the tinfoil production process. To decide whether the villagers have lead poisoning, they have to take a special blood test, which Wang's institution can not provide. "We don't have the facilities," he said. "Funding for our center is limited due to the economic situation."

The local government agency in Lanxi supervising occupational diseases noticed the health issues involved in tinfoil making about two years ago, an official at the local sanitation supervision department, who only identified himself as Jin, told *Beijing Today*.

"We're not sure whether the laws regarding occupational diseases are applicable to this issue," he said. The subject of the enforcement of the law should be licensed employers, but the foil makers are mostly individual families. "They don't have business licenses, and the government has not approved their production. But to survive, they do it anyway."

Jin said his department has asked for instructions in this regard from its superior department in Jinhua City, but no reply has been received. Jin and Wang also said local people do not seem to care that much about the problem. For a long time, nobody has come to the disease control center to have their health situation checked out, nor have county hospitals reported foil-making related diseases. Even if the authorities carried out law enforcement efforts to prevent tinfoil occupational diseases, people wouldn't appreciate the authorities interfering in their business, Jin said.

Despite these problems, to protect the rights of the laborers, the local government can still create some administrative regulations cleaning up the underground production or requiring certain health measures, Du Yang, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences told *Beijing Today*.

Wang Hui said the disease control center is planning to send staff to the villages after the Chinese New Year holiday to probe the health situation, and will then consider conducting blood tests for lead poisoning with the assistance of the authorities in Jinhua.

Garbage is melted down to source more metal for the tinfoil

Photo by Pan Wenlong

The details of a case involving the embezzlement of 0.92 billion yuan by two former vice presidents of the Agricultural Development Bank of China, Hu Chushou and Yu Dalu, were reported last week by *Beijing News*.

The case was exposed as early as 2003 in the annual auditing report made the National Audit Office. However, Hu and Yu were not arrested until more than a year later, in September 2004.

## Former Bank Leaders' Embezzlement Uncovered

The Agricultural Development Bank in Beijing  
photo by Li Shuzhuan

Yu Dalu



Hu Chushou

By Wang Fang

## Disclosure of the case

In May 2003, the annual auditing report issued by the National Audit Office stated that from 1996 to 1999, the Agricultural Development Bank of China gave loans worth 0.92 billion yuan to a company for the purchase of electronic equipment and vehicles, and 0.81 billion yuan of the loans had been embezzled and spent on the stock market by Hu and Yu.

On July 11, the Ministry of Supervision disclosed that the company involved in the embezzlement case was Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company, whose boss Cai Guo'an was later arrested. In September, Hu Chushou and Yu Dalu were arrested for embezzling 0.91 billion yuan.

*Caijing Magazine* revealed how Hu Chushou, Yu Dalu and Cai Guo'an organized to embezzle the money. First, the Agricultural Development Bank of China gave Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company loans. Second, Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company purchased the equipment and then leased the equipment to the bank.

Further complicating the matter was Hu Guang, Hu Chushou's son, who became a shareholder in Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company.

## The relationship between the company and the bank

In August 1994, the Agricultural Development Bank of China was established in Beijing. According to No. 25 document (1994) released by the State Council, the Agricultural Development Bank of China was to be responsible for finance related to the agricultural policy designated by the state. The principal mission was to "serve agriculture and agricultural development."

On October 21, 1994, Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Com-

pany was formally registered with the State Administration of Industry and Commerce.

*Beijing News* said that it was no coincidence that the company was set up only two months after the opening of the Agricultural Development Bank, which represented a new source of government investment.

According to its registration documentation, the capital of Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company was two million yuan, which included 720,000 yuan from the Trust and Investment Corporation of the Agricultural Bank of China.

In addition, much of the personnel of Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company was drawn from the Agricultural Bank of China. Hu Chushou and Cai Guo'an were both from Hunan Province and they became friends in 1991 when Cai was transferred to work in the Agricultural Bank of China. In 1994, when Hu was appointed vice president of the Agricultural Development Bank of China, Cai was also transferred to become the manager of Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company.

## Bank expansion boosts company profits

Prior to 1996, business was not so good at Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company. According to a report by Zhongcaijing Certified Public Accountant Office, at the end of 1996, the company's capital assets were 69,660,000 yuan and the debts incurred were 71,290,000 yuan.

When the Agricultural Development Bank of China was founded, the State Council suggested that since the bank was designed

as a tool for policy, it should not set up any branches in order to avoid any financial risks.

However, the bank set up more and more branch offices anyway. At the end of March 1997, the bank had a general office in Beijing, 35 subsidiary banks at the provincial level, 295 branches at the regional level and 1,613 branches at the county level, with about 60,000 employees overall.

In order to meet the requirements of the expansion, the bank leased at least 8,000 computers, a number of printers and other equipment from Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company.

However, all these branches became largely redundant when the government released state controls on agricultural investment in 2001. A survey carried out by China Agricultural University in 2002 found that a 12-staff branch of the Agricultural Development Bank of China in Liaoning Province provided only 500,000 yuan in loans, while the costs of running the branch added up to more than 1,100,000 yuan. In some counties in Northeast China, the branches of the Agricultural Development Bank of China did not provide any loans from 2000 to 2002.

## Hu's son and Meihe Company

Hu Gang, Hu Chushou's son, bought 10 percent of Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company's shares in October 1998. He was also the manager of Ritongcheng Company.

The business of Ritongcheng Company is the same as Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company; it also leases electronic products.

Hu and 70-year-old Han Xiaoguo registered Ritongcheng Company in 1997 with both of them taking 50 percent of the shares. *Beijing News* found that the address of Han on the registration document was the same as Cai Guo'an's address. In fact, Han was Cai's relative and Han's 50 percent stake was owned by Cai.

This purchase, therefore, was a further link between Hu Chushou and Cai Guo'an.

**Taking state-owned capital as private money**

In November 1997, Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company started its privatization reforms but the leasing contract between the company and the bank did not stop.

At that time, the state required that companies set up by the national banks should be separated from the banks. Therefore, the capital owned by the Agricultural Development Bank of China was withdrawn and Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company was reformed as a private company.

In December 1999, Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company began its second round of reform. This time, the former shareholders transferred their shares to Cai Guo'an, who now held a 55 percent stake in the company. In the meantime, Ritongcheng Company transferred its 5,600,000 yuan of shares to Hu Gang. At this time, Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company became a true private-owned company.

The Ministry of Supervision told *Beijing News* that Cai Guo'an took enormous state assets as his own assets during the two reforms, although the detailed amounts are not known yet.

In 2000, Beijing Meihe Electronic Products Company changed its name to Asia Digital Video Security Company. It also claimed to be a wholly foreign owned company. But in its booklet, it said that it was founded in October 1994 and inherited "Meihe's experience and achievements". The new president of Asia Digital Video Security Company was still Cai Guo'an.

The new company kept up its close relationship with the Agricultural Development Bank of China. In 2000, it won the contract for data supervision with Hebei Gaoyang branch of the Agricultural Development Bank of China.



By Hester Xu and Yan Zhang

Though it sometimes seems like a thankless task, Kang Jian knows she has no choice but to continue. This woman in her fifties has seen her promising legal career become dominated by her quest for justice for the many Chinese women used for "comfort" and forced labor by the invading Japanese army 60 years ago. As if consistent rejection of the claim from the Japanese courts hasn't been bad enough, Kang has also had to get by without much assistance or recognition from her own country. China's comfort women were a story that remained virtually unknown here for fifty years after the war and the issue has only recently gained any publicity. And today, Kang still finds herself largely alone in her battle for justice.

#### A lawsuit brought by a conference

Kang Jian was one of new China's first female lawyers, having gained a bachelor's degree from China University of Political Science and Law and a Master's degree from Renmin University of China.

In September 1995, she attended the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women, which was held in Beijing, as one of four female lawyers representing China. One day, just as a symposium of Chinese and Japanese female lawyers was drawing to a close, a Japanese lawyer named Niriko Omori brought up an issue concerning a lawsuit against the Japanese government filed by several Chinese comfort women. Since it is very difficult for foreigners to conduct an investigation and collect evidence in China, she proposed working with Chinese lawyers willing to provide legal support in order to bring justice for the victims. As soon as Omori finished her talk, the conference room fell into silence. Not a single Chinese lawyer spoke up. It was the first time Kang had ever heard about comfort women, as it was not mentioned in any of the history textbooks in China. The silence in the meeting room was embarrassing. Rising up, Kang was the only person to break the ice. She said in a clear voice: "From the point of view of law, it is a legal affair of litigation. As a lawyer for the Chinese side, it is not impossible to help with an investigation."

She has a small figure and speaks with a low tone. But her fast rhythm of speaking and steady gaze seem to build an invisible pressure on the people around her. Omori was very pleased after hearing her response. When the meeting was over, Kang walked towards her to wish her success. First taking it as a one-time job to collect evidence, Kang thought it would be finished very soon. She never thought that she could still be doing the same thing 10 years later. Even now she doesn't know how long it will take to complete her task.

One month after the conference Omori came to Beijing again to see her. Kang was very surprised that Omori could come back so soon and at the same time was a little doubtful that a Japanese could want to do such things for free. But after receiving from Omori a 40 page indictment already translated into Chinese, she couldn't help but feel genuinely impressed by the earnest intent and perseverance of her Japanese counterpart.



Protesting with Japanese volunteer outside court. Photos provided by Kang Jian



Another day, another lawsuit, as Kang continues the fight.

# Fighting a Lonely Cause

**"As a lawyer, I take it as my own responsibility to continue what I've started. I might not care if I didn't know about it, but since I know the truth, my conscience compels me to carry on."**



Photo by Hester Xu

In November, Omori returned to Beijing with 35 Japanese lawyers who had agreed to provide free legal support for the case. This time, she asked Kang directly if she could provide legal service free of charge. Knowing that practicing law in Japan is a very lucrative profession and seeing that so many Japanese lawyers had sacrificed their personal gains to help the Chinese victims, Kang didn't even give a second thought to giving her promise. Recollecting this experience, she smiled: "It was very simple for me at that time. As a legal investigation, I thought I could do it just for once. If I had known it could be so complicated, I might have been scared."

Working with Japanese lawyers, Kang Jian began to hear about conscience, human rights and other legal issues. Although she had contact with Japanese people before, this was the first time that she actually worked with Japanese lawyers. The nature of her work seemed to have changed, and at home some peo-

ple began to look at her differently and even regarded her as a traitor. She had to be very cautious and try her best to do everything according to official principles.

Kang was deeply moved by her visit to a court in Japan in 1996. For the first time she found that the people there were peace-loving and friendly, and willing to file a lawsuit for Chinese people for the purpose of helping the Japanese government restore its credit and to address the sufferings caused to people in other countries. For 10 years, Kang has seen them work with enormous difficulties trying to help those victims in China. As a citizen in the victimised country, Kang feels that she should do her best to help her own compatriots as a lawyer, at the same time as raising awareness of the issue in China.

#### The hard process of collecting evidence

Kang Jian's desk is stacked with a thick pile of maps of China. She has forgotten how many roads in them she has already travelled across. But she does remember that she has travelled through most of the poorest and most remote villages in Hebei, Henan, Shandong, Shanxi and Hainan to collect evidence for the litigation.

March 8 1996 is a day Kang Jian will never forget. She went to Yangquan Village of Yuxian County in Shanxi Province. Having never been to such a remote and backward countryside area with its scenic views and fresh air, Kang joked with her colleagues that it was like being on a tourist trip. But when they told the cab driver where they wanted to go, no one wanted to take them there

because the mountain trails are virtually inaccessible. They had to go to a factory to borrow a truck. When they finally arrived after bumping along 20 miles on a mountain trail, Kang's hands had blisters from rubbing them together.

It was already 6 o'clock in the evening after they finished their work. The sky was dark and the only light they could make out was from the headlights of their truck. The winter is cold in the mountains in the north, and the trail was covered by a thin layer of ice. On one side of the trail was a deep chasm. When the truck slipped on the road and couldn't get back up the slope, they had to get out, take off their coats and put them under the wheels so the tyres could hold on to the stones and grass. Although the driver was scared, he didn't tell the two lawyers from Beijing but drove the truck forward inch by inch.

It had already passed midnight when they finally made it to the foot of the mountain. A tyre blew and they had to go to a factory to borrow a spanner. When the man in the reception room saw two women, he was astonished and asked in amazement: "How did you come here and what do you want to do here?" Despite his surprise, he was very eager to help when they told him the purpose of their visit. They arrived in the county's hotel at 2 o'clock in the morning. Except for a bowl of hot water with brown sugar added in a victim's home in the afternoon, the best the family could produce, they hadn't drunk or eaten anything for 10 hours. Since no hot water was supplied due to a power cut, they had to munch at a pack of instant noodles they had bought before going to bed.

In 1997 and 1998, Jian went to Cheniangou in Shanxi to collect evidence from a victim of forced labour. Cheniangou can't be reached by any type of automobile, even a cross-country vehicle. Not used to walking mountain trails as the locals do, Kang didn't know what to do. After hearing her story, a primary school teacher volunteered to help. There was no telephone in the village and it would take hours to reach the village on a mountain trail for someone unaccustomed to mountain climbing. So the teacher got up to a rooftop and shouted the name of the victim. He heard the calling and arrived half an hour later.

Kang used to leave Beijing on Friday evening and collect evidence over the weekend so she would be able to return to her job on Monday. But as the number of plaintiffs in the case grew, she had no choice but to spend her weekdays on it as well.

#### Calling for help

In 10 years, the number of plaintiffs involved in the case has grown from 180 to 200, and nearly 2,000 victims have been identified and keep contacts with Kang. She feels powerless to help so many people. Each day she has many telephone calls to answer and many legal papers to read. "My hair has turned white and my sight has dimmed in filing these lawsuits, but the road ahead is getting narrower," Kang sighed, a trace of uncertainly appearing in her eyes for just a brief moment.

From being a director of the prestigious Beijing Number One Law Firm with 70 employees, to the director of the Beijing Fangyuan Law Firm with just nine staff, Kang knows the sacrifices she has made. In Japan, 300 lawyers are providing free legal support for this prolonged suit, but only Kang and her two assistants are doing the same in China.

In July 1996 Chinese comfort women appeared in a Japanese court for the first time. Outside the courtroom some angry Japanese people shouted at them to leave. Recollecting this scene, Kang says resolutely: "As a lawyer, I take it as my own responsibility to continue what I've

started. I might not care if I didn't know about it, but since I know the truth, my conscience compels me to carry on." With limited energy and financial resources, no government funding or donations from individuals, she often feels exhausted. Except for 500 yuan donated by a Chinese writer, all her money comes from donations made by Japanese people working for peace and friendship movements. Kang explains that she still feels she must do her best; otherwise the victims will die in regret and sorrow.

Kang hopes more volunteers in China will join her and that more people will make donations to help with the case. "Currently no charitable foundation in China is organizing any form of donation campaigns for such victims," she said with some disappointment. Kang has made appeals to several foundations, but all of them expressed a need to make donations to other causes. Among the 13 cases she has already brought to court as part of the case, only one reached conciliation and the rest were immediately thrown out by Japanese judges. Her only gratification is that the Japanese courts have begun to acknowledge the facts of the case, which they denied repeatedly in the past. Kang hopes this will help Japanese citizens recognize this infamous chapter in their history.

Despite the many reverses she has suffered, Kang is not ready to give way. Continuing to travel back and forth between China and Japan to organize more litigation, Kang has shared ups and downs with the victims, as well as witnessing their pain in having to remember the past. She once told a Japanese court calmly: "As a lawyer, I know that the law does not admit human feelings. But I am also well aware that the law is not blind to humanity and there is no exception for the law of any country. For this case, both the plaintiffs and I expect a just ruling, but we're not begging for it. The plaintiffs have nothing to lose even if the case is lost. However, Japan would certainly show to the people of this world how hypocritically it has treated peace and human rights if its ruling is improper."



# Decoding Beijing's Dragon Vein

By Hu Jian

Looking at the northern end of the North China Plain, Beijing served as China's capital for 33 emperors over three dynasties, the Yuan, Ming and Qing. The city's layout, centered on a north-south meridian axis facing south, has since its inception been symbolic of the supremacy of imperial power. This central axis is known as the "dragon vein."

But now, the north-south central axis theory is about to be re-written. As Kui Zhongyu, an aerial survey expert from the China Mapping Research Institute, pointed out recently, the axis actually deviates about 2 degrees from the meridian!

## Questioning

Kui made the discovery in the course of shooting an aerial panorama of Beijing. "I was shocked! Actually I couldn't believe it at first when I saw that the axis was some distance off the meridian," Kui, who has been involved in aerial survey and military reconnaissance work since the 1960s, said in an interview with *Beijing Sci-tech Report* on January 4.

For the past seven-and-a-half centuries, the north-south central axis has been the soul of the capital city's layout and an important symbol of China's cultural and national identity. Along it are distributed some of the city's most important landmarks. It begins in the south at Yongdingmen, the main gate of Beijing in the old city wall, and passes through Qianmen, Tian'anmen and Wumen, the southern entrance of the Forbidden City. It continues north through the northern entrance, Shenwumen, passes through Wanshou Pavilion on top of Jingshan and ends at the Drum and Bell towers.

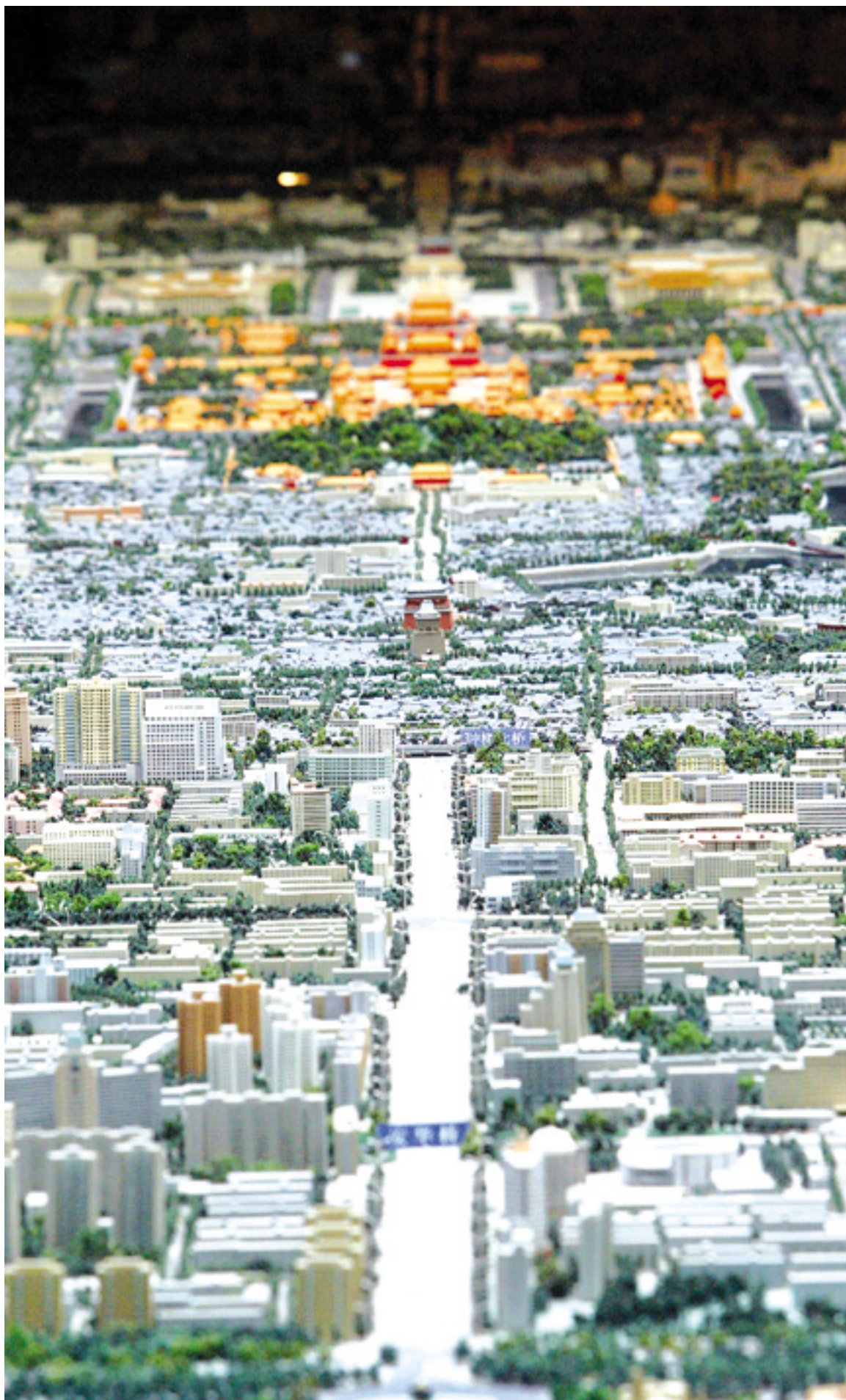
"Measured by the coordinates, the central axis is 2-odd degrees off the meridian," said Kui, thus, from Yongdingmen, the axis extends northwards while departing widdershins from the meridian, and when reaching the northern tip at the Drum and Bell towers, it is actually some 300 meters off the meridian!

## Investigating

The axis splits Beijing into two halves, and the palace area of the Forbidden City takes up one-third of the 7.7 kilometer line. The main buildings within the palace stand along the axis, which passes directly under the throne in Fengtian Hall.

After making his discovery, Kui began a comprehensive investigation, checking with other mapping experts and cartographers, re-mapping and comparing his results with earlier surveys. He concluded that not only had professional cartographers long ago discovered the subtle deviation, but that it had actually been reported to the central government by experts in charge of Beijing's city planning in the early years of New China.

Kui even did a special experiment with his colleagues at the end of last year. They attached a two-meter-long pole to the top of the newly rebuilt Yongdingmen, and marked a 6-meter-long line with black adhesive tape to the paved path leading north from the gate. "The adhesive tape is on the actual central axis, and the shadow cast by the pole represents the meridian," explained Kui. Based on an accurate calculation of all



Looking towards Xanadu – the Drum and Bell towers can be seen in the middle distance of this model of Beijing, further north is Jingshan Park and the golden roofs of the Forbidden City.

Photos by Tian Xiaotong

related astronomical figures and factors at that particular time in 2004, the result of the experiment coincided exactly with what he had first concluded!

"Not only on the panorama photo, but also on relief maps and even tourist maps, the central axis is with no exception off the meridian, although the deviation might be unnoticeable to most people," Kui said.

## Decoding

The mystery of how the central axis came to deviate from the meridian may go back more than 700 hundred years.

The basic city form and structure of Beijing was largely determined by the plan of Dadu, as it was known when it was capital of the Yuan Dynasty. After taking over the imperial throne, Kubla Khan (1215-1294), Genghis Khan's grandson, took Zhongdu, capital of the defeated Jin, as his new capital and built a new city, which he named Dadu, on the ruined site in 1273.

Dadu was a triple-walled city with concentric boundaries, divided into an outer city, an administrative district and the palace. A clear vertical axis bisected the whole city. In the center of the southern part of the city

was the administrative district, within which was the palace.

After initially being based in Nanjing, the Ming Dynasty made Beijing its capital in 1421, following the basic layout of Dadu, possibly because the city walls had suffered only little damage during the war against the Yuan. The only significant changes were that the northern and southern city walls were rebuilt slightly to the south of their original locations. In the Qing Dynasty, Beijing remained the capital with no major changes made to the city's layout.

Kui, along with other mapping experts and historians, eventually came to focus on an official named Liu Bingzhong (1216-1274), a key figure and supervisor in the construction of Dadu in the Yuan Dynasty.

According to some historians, in order to legitimize the non-Chinese regime in accordance with Chinese customs and win support of the Han people, Kubla Khan built his capital as a Chinese-style city, and ordered Han scholar-officials Liu Bingzhong and Guo Shoujing to oversee its construction. The historians suggest that the central axis might have been deliberately

skewed by the two Han officials, as a mark of resistance against the occupying foreign forces.

But Kui was not convinced by this hypothesis. Historical documents show that in 1256, Kubla Khan ordered Liu Bingzhong to take charge of building the capital Shangdu (Xanadu) at a site called Kaiping in what is now Xilin Gol League in Inner Mongolia. Kubla himself took over the imperial throne in Shangdu in 1260. It was not until almost 10 years later that he made Dadu his new capital. In fact it is recorded that Kubla Khan lived and worked in Dadu during winter and in Shangdu during summer.

With this in mind, Kui and his colleagues continued their surveying. They found that the central axis as it is passes right through the ancient site of Shangdu, some 270 kilometers north of Beijing.

Did Kubla Khan order that the meridian axis deviate from its true course, in order to symbolically connects his two capitals? Historical data from the Yuan Dynasty is far from complete, an although scientists and historians are still striving to decode the mystery of the "dragon vein," it is a question that may never be satisfactorily answered.



## Clean Up for Confucius Temple

By Li Ruifen

The Confucian Temple in Beijing was originally built in the 14th century during the Yuan Dynasty, and has been renovated several times over the centuries. The latest major restoration was done in 2000, when the grounds were repaved. In 2005, 100 years after the imperial examination system was abolished in China, work will begin on the biggest renovation of the Confucian Temple since the foundation of the People's Republic of China.

The ancient and cultural city of Beijing has been fading little by little, and started taking on brilliant modern hues. In the course of this irresistible trend, Beijing's archways, the main landmarks of the capital's major streets through the Ming and Qing dynasties, were dismantled one after another with little public comment. Four such archways still stand today in Guozijian Street in Dongcheng District, at the eastern end of which the Confucian Temple is located.

Confucius (Kong Qiu, 551-479 BC), was a philosopher and educator. Confucianism is the core of traditional Chinese culture, laying a foundation for the ideology, customs and moral attitudes of Chinese feudal society. The Confucian Temple in Beijing is one of the countries most important temples for worshipping Confucius.

## Dacheng Hall

The main structure of the Confucian Temple is Dacheng Hall. As a sign of respect, the roof of the hall was covered with tiles of bright yellow, which in ancient China were only allowed to be used by the royal family. In front of the hall is a terrace two meters higher than the courtyard ground, which is carved with patterns of flying dragons. Although exposed to the elements, the carvings remain vivid and delicate, demonstrating the advanced technique of the craftsmen.

Inside the hall, a wooden memorial tablet inscribed with the characters "Memorial Tablet of the Greatest Sage and Teacher Confucius" stands on a table, with statues of Confucius' 72 top students standing on both sides. In ancient times, when royal memorial rites were being held, no one but the emperor

could enter the hall to worship Confucius.

The main focus of the renovation work on Dacheng Hall will be on the colored murals decorating the walls. Painted several hundred years ago, the colors have mostly lost their bright colors. According to Guan Shaojian, deputy curator of the Capital Museum and the person in charge of the renovation, the exterior drawings will be repainted, while the interior ones will largely be left untouched.

## Cultural Relics

After its establishment in the Sui Dynasty, the imperial examination system became the regular path into officialdom in Chinese feudal society. The system developed through the Tang, Song and Yuan dynasties, reaching its zenith in the Ming and Qing. Tablets recording the lists of metropolitan graduates in the Confucian Temple are testimonies to the ancient imperial examination system.

Among the thousands of names carved on the 198 tablets in the Confucius Temple, one can find some familiar ones, such as Liu Yong and Ji Xiaolan (famous officials and scholars in the Qing Dynasty).

However, the protection and renovation of these tablets is one of the most difficult tasks of the project. Erosion, acid rain and vandalism has left many of the tablets almost unreadable.

## Legends in the Temple

The Evil-Differentiating Cypress is the most famous ancient tree in the Confucian Temple. During the reign of Emperor Jiajing of the Ming Dynasty, Yan Song, a treacherous prime minister, came to pay respects to Confucius on behalf of the emperor. When he passed beneath the cypress, a sudden gust moved the cypress branches, knocking off Yan Song's black-gauze official cap. Now the tree is nearly 700 years old, but still flourishing.

For thousands of years, Confucianism has influenced the culture and society of the Chinese nation and other Asian countries. Some of the core values are still held as important in today's modern world. The renovation work in 2005 might be seen as a conclusion of the development of Confucianism, preparing for its continued shining in the coming future.



## What's New

By Tom Spearman  
CD

Deep Purple: The Very Best of



## Deep Purple

There are some artists whose entire careers seem to be leading up to a greatest hits album, people who somehow manage to keep on releasing the occasional gem amidst reams of awful rubbish. Elton John for instance, or Eric Clapton. Deep Purple are perhaps the ideal example of this. They were once hailed as a band to challenge the dominance of Led Zeppelin in the hard rock genre. But, following an unfortunate revolving door approach to band personnel, their output was hit and miss to put it kindly. However, there's no disputing the classic status of their greatest songs, all of which, plus a few utter stinkers, are gathered here. So is *Smoke on the Water* really the greatest rock and roll riff of all time? Or is it *Black Night*?

## DVD

Stella Street



This reviewer was a little disappointed to discover that this DVD is not the TV series but a movie version of an idea that started life as one of the more bizarre sitcoms on British television. As with all feature length versions of hit comedy ideas, this is a mixture of inspired moments and some pretty flat writing. It's a lot better than Ali G's movie, but is saddled with the same need for a dumb plot. Comedians John Sessions and Phil Cornwell brilliantly impersonate a group of celebrities – including Mick Jagger, Jack Nicholson, Al Pacino, Michael Caine and David Bowie – who have all decided to move to suburban Stella Street to settle down and escape the pressures of fame and life in the spotlight. As a sitcom, this madcap idea worked superbly and there are still some wonderful moments here, such as the effect on guests at Michael Caine's house party after Keith Richards has spiked the booze. But then the plot rather spoils it all. Bring on the series!

## Vanity Fair



Mira Nair, director of the excellent *Monsoon Wedding* and *Salaam Bombay*, attempts a fresh spin on Thackeray's classic novel about snobbery and social climbing in 18th century England. She fails completely, but that doesn't stop this from being an enormously entertaining movie. The trouble is it all seems to move too fast. There's a lot to pack in to a two hour film, but the storylines and the characters' journeys are and conclude so quickly that they lack any depth or credibility. In the middle of it all is Reese Witherspoon, doing a fine job as the plucky but lowborn Becky Sharp who is determined to make something of herself. This proves to be a harder and more costly ambition than she realizes. The wearisomely familiar clichés of period drama are all here, but the film is fun, nonetheless.

# The Last Night of Taipan Chin



By Jacqueline Yu

To change a short novel into a three-hour drama is a big challenge but *The Last Night of Taipan Chin* has done a pretty good job of it.

This showgirl-looks-back drama was adapted from the short novel by Taiwan writer Bai Xianyong, which tells the story of a dancehall hostess from her point of view. The story begins on her last night of work, then follows the reminiscences of the heroine from Shanghai to Taiwan and records the drastic social changes around her as well as her own personal experiences.

Scriptwriter Zhao Yaomin expanded the personal story-telling into a panoramic view of life, featuring the prosperity of the famous dance hall Bailemen in Shanghai in the 1940s and dance hall Yebali in Taiwan in the 1960s.

The play has a cast of over 40 actors, mainly from Shanghai Drama Center. The original figures that only were mentioned in one sentence in Bai's story were brought to life. Words that were narrated in the original story became lines spoken by characters, yet

they still sounded natural.

Actress Liu Xiaoqing takes the leading role, playing Chin the dance hostess from her 20s to early 40s. Chin has affairs with three men (a university student, a shipman and a businessman), yet only shares real love with the first. As the dancehall hostess, Chin's role involves a lot of dancing (mainly tango) and singing, including songs that were popular in Shanghai in the 1940s.

As one of China's first movie stars in the 1980s, Liu, 53, is widely known for her strong character and versatile performing skills, as well as for affairs and financial scandals. Perhaps it can be said that she's experienced similar ups and downs to Chin, enabling her to understand and give life to the role. Some early reports were unkind, saying she was too old for the part, but she gave it a certain gravitas.

A circular platform 12 metres wide was built on the stage and changes from one scene to another were fluent. The neon lighting also gave a cinematic touch to the drama.

Photo by Cui Jun

## AREA DEATH SALUTES METAL



Zhi Xi on stage

Photo by  
Shen Yanqing

By Wang Yao

It was death metal night last Friday in Nameless Highland bar, with a party organized by Area Death, an underground recording company for mainland death metal bands. Five bands showed up and demonstrated some of the trends of the genre.

Dian Kuang E Huan, a band from Zhengzhou, Henan, howled for the beginning of the night. Judging from the lyrics and the sudden stops during the performance, the band was pretty hardcore. It was difficult for people to get the lyrics, because of the howling style of the vocalist, whose long hair covered his face and torso. The audience found it rather hard to get into.

Next up was Shi Jiao Ri, a 4-year-old band who are into black death metal, a form focusing on despair and darkness. The audience liked their mournful sound and straightforward performing. Their guitar riff sounded exciting. The riffs had speed and repeated and stimulating tunes. When the riff started, at least 40 young people pushed to the front of the stage, shoulder to shoulder, swinging their heads up and down. Vocalist Shi Jiaori's lyrics were also easy to follow. During the fourth song, the audience began to pogo dance furiously and the band was obviously motivated by the scene. They speeded up their rhythm, especially the drummer. This was one of the highlights of the night.

Xue Xing Gao Chao, the newest band of the night, presented a new branch of brutal death metal with a harsh sound. Some fans felt the

vocalist was just like a machine; he did not sing anything but used his high pitched falsetto to produce a non-stop scream. It was monotone stuff which not everyone liked, although some showed their support for the band. They said the band had energy and were not weighed down by any pressure.

The fourth band was the star name of the night, Zhi Xi, who formed in 1997. They began with a mild and touching intro, which drew the attention of the audience as it was the first soft tune of the night. In fact the band varied the pace of their music a lot, adjusting to the thoughts and emotions of the songs. They were obviously more professional and competent than the previous bands. As the crowd swung and pogoed to the music, this was another climax to the night. When the band began their last song *Xun Zang* (*Bury The Living With the Dead*), the band's supporters, to show their understanding of the song and their respect for the band, threw money on stage, something they had prepared in advance. The band, the stage and the audience were soon covered with it. It was an impassioned and moving scene.

The closing performer was Ling Ji, a band mixing black metal, death metal and certain Gothic elements. The performance even involved Flamenco guitar skills and some other classical factors, which embellished the band's dark rhythm. Beyond the various styles, their female singer was another breakthrough of the night.

By Pan Hao

A bottle of beer, a few close friends and a decent live band; you'd have to try hard to find a better way to spend your Friday night. Last Friday at Big Easy bar, located beside Chaoyang Park's south gate, the audience got to hear a band called Rhythm Dog playing the very fine blues and jazz tunes.

The audience packed in close to the six piece band, featuring Kim Hao on saxophone, Guan Fei on drums, vocalist Krista Kellner, and bassist and backing vocalist Zhang Ling. The band have been playing at Big Easy for five years, and as the saxophonist and band leader Kim Hao said, "We helped this bar in shaping the mu-

sic scene here."

The band played the fast tempo *Blues Shuffle Jam*, and soul-oriented *Chain of Fools*. They grooved with energy and warmth. The voice of the female singer, Krista, was infectious and powerful, and had people nodding along with the music. The band mainly played fast blues tunes on Friday night. "People who come out on Friday night just want to dance," explained Krista, who was born in Austin, Texas. She says she's been a music fan since the age of three, and she has a wide range of music tastes including jazz, blues, soul, gospel and R&B. Aretha Franklin is one of her favorites, so you can guess her singing style.

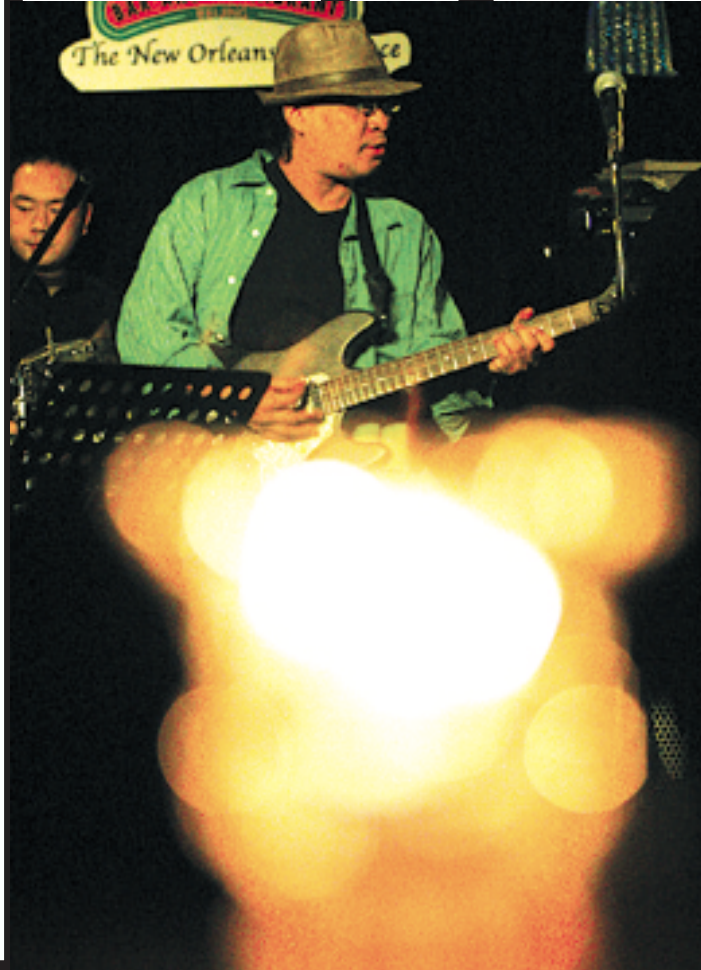
There were plenty of im-

provisations in the performance. Sometimes, the band played around the original tune, going off in their own direction and then coming back to the riff. One minute, the saxophone player squeezed out some hot phrases, the next the guitarist took his turn to crank up the volume and play some tasty blues licks. Surprisingly, bassist Zhang Ling sang well too, with a deep and rich voice.

When the band played *Mustang Sally*, many au-



## Friday Night Blues Jam



dience members were encouraged to sing along and everyone got up and danced. At that moment, there was no gap between the party and the performance. It was the kind of fun and closeness that you can't get at a big concert. *Georgia on My Mind* was probably the only slow tune the band played that night, though they did not miss the chance to alter the timing to 6/8 half way through the song, which resulted in more of a boogie sound. It was a smart twist. The communication between each band member was fluent, and showed the benefit of years of playing together, the whole band sounding really tight. They also played legendary tune *Stand by Me*, which illustrated the band's versatility.

For those who love quieter jazz, there are jazz nights at the Big Easy (west of the Chaoyang Park's southern gate) every Thursday night.

Photos by Tian Yufeng



By Xie Lixue

Nowadays, the popular way for professionals in the business world is to set up a self-owned company, the best way to reduce the stress of finding a good job and an opportunity to make big money.

The Internet has diversified modes of creating companies. No money, no investors, no resources? No problem! As long as you find the right place and right direction, you will be the next manager. Here are the five hottest sectors for easy start-ups and seven ways to break into the market.

**IT:**  
The IT industry still holds the mythical allure of making overnight millionaires. In order to provide vivid pictures of goods on sale online, sellers need to spend 1-3 yuan only for one picture, but little on technology.

Not everyone is a professional on the computer, but most professionals depend on it in their daily work. Therefore, when computers crash, repair agencies are in demand. Why not open up a computer clinic when 40 million personal computers are in the waiting room?

**Hi-tech:**  
According to a prediction by Analysys, a market research institution in the UK, revenue from mobile phone games will reach 3 billion Euro in 2008.

Believe it or not, three students invested 40,000 yuan and established a small mobile phone-based game company in Sichuan in 2003. Ten months later, they saw a profit of 200,000, and then received \$1 million from Softbank Investment.

**Traditional Chinese medicine:**

Traditional Chinese medicine has great development space, with preferential policies from the Chinese government. In December 2004, the Shanghai government invested 70 million yuan to set up a TCM research and development center in order to promote the industry.

**Education and training:**

In a report on the life quality of Chinese citizens in 2004 by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the main purpose of saving money was to fund the education of the young generation.

Many parents realize the need for investment in childhood education, so the pre-schoolers are the targets of competition among educators in music, arts, physical culture, among others.

ChinaHR.com said that the demand for the minor languages professionals, such as Spanish, Arabic, Korean, and Hindi increased 30-40 percent while few universities have those majors, so why not set up a language center for them?

**Service:**

One fashionable area is the spa, which is popular among white collar workers to reduce pressure and maintain health and beauty.

# Start Your Own Business in the New Year



The number of new graduates increases every year, and for an increasing number of them, employment means starting up their own business.

Photos by BQB

## Growth to Bring Jobs for Graduates

China's economy will maintain sustained, fast growth in coming years, bringing plenty of job opportunities for college and university graduates, minister of education Zhou Ji said last Thursday in Beijing.

Zhou made the remarks at a press conference held by the Information Office of the State Council, saying that during the past few years, a job-hunting system has been introduced for Chinese college and university students.

But Zhou emphasized that more efforts are needed, from the State Council to grassroots administrations, to help college graduates find jobs, such as a better use of the established information-sharing system and further development of the market demand-oriented teaching reform.

The government launched a program in recent years, calling on graduates to work in China's western regions. "You'll have more jobs there," said Zhou.

## Postgraduates to Focus More on Research

Postgraduates in China will focus more on academic research, as the Chinese government will take this measure as the means to assess postgraduate education, minister of education Zhou Ji said.

"Postgraduate literally means students studying by doing research," said Zhou.

He said China will increase the proportion of research work in the postgraduate education.

As a result, tutors or postgraduates who do not have any research projects will be taken as disqualified.

## 1.1 Million Students Took Postgraduate Exam

More than 1,170,000 students took entrance examinations for postgraduate study - one in two undergraduate students on January 21, according to Zhou Ji, minister of education.

Zhou said China will keep to the current postgraduate education system which is research-oriented, unlike in other countries where postgraduate studies are seen as transitional education and focus on course study.

As to the doctoral students, Zhou said that they are expected to work more in teaching, research and educational administration.

Currently, the total on-campus university student population in China is over 20 million. This covers students from the undergraduates, postgraduates to Ph.D researchers.

(Xinhua)

Talking jobs and corporate culture

# Suntory, Equal Opportunity for Every Student



Suntory Japan last year created the first blue rose through genetic modification. Photo by sina.com

Suntory is Japan's leading producer and distributor of alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages. In 1984, Suntory came to China, investing \$50 million to run the beverage business in Jiangsu Province and then expanded to Shanghai.

Today, Suntory has a broad range of business in China. During the online chat between Lan Rong, HR manager of Suntory China and students on www.54club.com, the applicants gained a better understanding of the company and its recruitment plan.

**Job opportunity:**

**Q: What is the development plan for your company? Is it possible to work in other cities?**

**Lan:** In 1998, the corporation set up the Suntory (China) Holding Co. in Shanghai and now we have three beer factories and two beverage factories with more than 3,000 employees. Those are the main areas of business covered in China, and we plan to expand the business to the northern and eastern regions. For instance, we have established the Suntory Food Company in Beijing.

We have published our positions in a career-seeking magazine in Shanghai. Majors in marketing and

sales, food engineering and Japanese are welcome to send us their resumes. Also in some of our factories, we need students from professional schools to do the research work.

**Q: You have said that not only bachelor graduates could work in your company, but also graduates from professional schools. Could we develop quickly in your company?**

**Lan:** Yes, we don't put the degree first, and we also welcome professional graduates. Now about 50 percent of employees are graduated without a bachelor degree, some of whom have achieved manager level through their efforts.

**Selection process:**

**Q: How do you select candidates?**

**Lan:** Nowadays, there are so many professionals with bachelor degrees. I know that they possess great skills and knowledge, but Suntory does not focus on personalities. We judge an applicant from the activities he/she took on and off campus.

**Q: What questions are asked**

**in interviews?**

**Lan:** The first round is handled by HR department. As for the applicants who apply for positions in the quality control center, we will emphasize on their graduation thesis and ask them to demonstrate ideas or inventions. For sales staff, we'd like to

know their social activities and how they spend their spare time. In the second round, our managers create a situation and see how they cope with that, often, many new ideas and thoughts will come out.

**Internship program:**  
**Q: Do you offer internship program for students?**

**Lan:** Certainly. We will release the positions for interns on our website. Currently our program is mainly on food engineering. Last year, we set up a quality control center in Jinqiao, Shanghai, and most of the employees there were hired directly from universities. We welcome and need students who study food engineering to join us. Please send your resume to hr@suntory.com.cn.

(Edited by Xie Lixue)

## Seeking Employment

Web design graduates are available for free internships in groups.

Call Liu or Tang at: 0311-3160000.

Email: luogq@heinfo.net  
www.inhb.com

Laid-off workers are providing PC maintenance services such as system upgrade, virus detection and removal, data copying and recovering, system utilization and security. Please call: 6732 7217

Cheap webmasters available at your call. Whenever you have problems with your PC, contact Miss Yuan and Miss Jing at: 010-6281 7129, 6281 7127. Visit us at: www.dfit.com.cn

Webmasters wanted. Familiarity with the Internet, web page design and music composition software essential. Love of music useful. Contact Mr. Hu at: 6333-1671 ext. 8006.

A graduate of information management from Huazhong S&T University in Wuhan, sophisticated in C/C++, VC6.0, VFP, Access, SQL Server, Activex and software developing, familiar with Flash, Photoshop, Excel, PP uses. Also familiar with medical English and Latin.

Contact: 82728588, 13622751429  
Email: waairu@sohu.com, sonx7@163.com

A self-motivated, patient, enthusiastic, active and diligent Beijing boy seeking a job as business interpreter, manager assistant, public relation representative, business service advisor, human resource official, office secretary.

Fluent English, excellent communication capability and command skills in computer.

Contact Yang Yang at: 13811243074

Email: ivan1339@sina.com

## Situations Vacant

Vacancies available for English teachers and editors. You can do it part-time or home. If you are a native English speaker and will stay in China for more than three months, please contact: 62552834, 13381392538(julia), or email: caoyanqin008@sohu.com

A cultural media company wants to hire a foreigner for international business.

Requirements: male, British, long time in Beijing, love Chinese culture, stable, honest. Legal experience an advantage. Contact: sun198052@yahoo.com.cn

PC sale persons and repairers wanted. New graduates and veterans preferred. 800 yuan minimum monthly salary. Contact: Peng Yu, Tel: 010-6281 7569

**A Beijing-based English newspaper is looking for reporters, freelancers and editors.**

**Chinese applicants should have university degrees in English or related majors and media experience.**

**Foreigners from the UK and US with relevant media experience preferred.**

**Please send your resumes and writing samples to: hr@ynet.com**



Over the years, the University of Melbourne has established itself as one of the finest universities in Australia through progressive management, realistic visions for the future and strategic collaborations.

The University of Melbourne encompasses 11 colleges, the Melbourne Business School and Victoria College, all of which provide students top-class and energetic study environments. Teaching at the university is done in multi-media classrooms and the facilities and multi-media teaching materials are all designed by the university's faculty.

More than 120 student clubs and communities on campus give students opportunities to develop communication skills, artistic potential and leadership abilities.

Last Monday, Chris Downes, general manager for offshore marketing and recruitment at the University of Melbourne chatted with Chinese students in our online "Study Abroad Salon" about studying in his university.

#### University basics:

**Melbourne seems very modern. How long is the history of your university?**

—ilikemelbourne-girl

The University of Melbourne was founded in 1853, making it the second oldest university in Australia and older than all but four universities in England.

The city of Melbourne was founded in 1835. It was recently voted (by those who know) as the most livable city in the world.

Melbourne is the educational hub of Victoria and has the greatest concentration of international students in the world after New York and London.

**How many campuses do you have?**

—Thorn Bird

The University of Melbourne is based on a single main campus in the heart of Melbourne, Australia's second largest city. There are also regional campuses for agriculture and food technology. We have an associated campus for the performing arts and the famous Melbourne Business School.

**How many students do you have? And how many international students and Chinese students?**

—JackieZhang

The university has about 40,000 students in total.

There are about 8,000 international students, of which 16,70 are from the PRC (including Hong Kong). We have about 600 students from the US and about 12,00 from Singapore. We have international students from more than 100 countries.

Most international students from China are enrolled in the faculty of economics and commerce and in the faculty of engineering (including our IT programs).

#### Courses and research programs:

**What are the famous subjects in your university?**

—F777

The University of Melbourne has 11 faculties. The oldest are medicine, law, science and arts – they have many famous graduates. Other faculties include economics and commerce, engineering, music, education, architecture and veterinary science.

There are many subjects that are offered (over 1,000 in the faculty of arts). We could talk about many famous features (this year the faculty of economics and commerce has two Nobel Prize winners). The faculty of medicine has graduated two Nobel Prize winners. The faculty of architecture has special programs in sustainable urban development that are highly valued in the region.

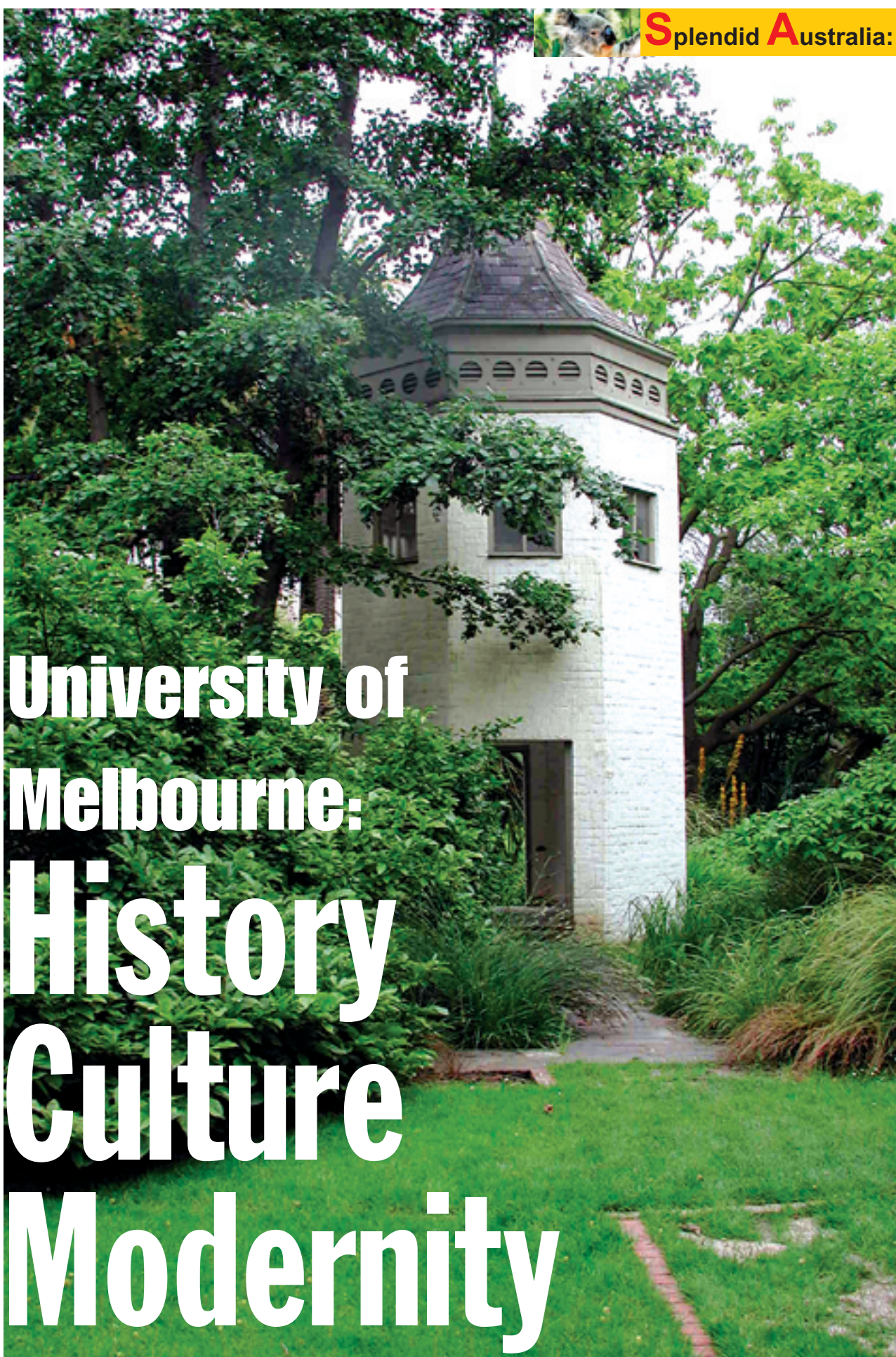
**I have heard about the Bio21 facility at your university. Can you tell us more about it?**

—ballpen

Located at Melbourne University's Parkville campus, the Bio21 Molecular Science And Biotechnology Institute is a multi-disciplinary research center specializing in medical, agricultural and environmental biotechnology.

The institute embraces commercialization as a facilitator of innovation, skills development and economic outcomes.

It draws together Victoria's top universities, research institutes, hospitals and industries to



Turret in the staff garden

Photos provided by the University of Melbourne



Chris Downes



Outside wall of the art faculty building



Clock tower

capitalize on the state's world-class research and development capabilities.

#### Relationship with China:

**Do you have cooperation with Chinese counterparts? How important is China's market to your university?**

—JackieZhang

The University of Melbourne's links with China are very important. We have exchange agreements with Fudan University, Nanjing University, Peking University, Shantou University, Tsinghua University, the University of Hong Kong and the University of Science and Technology of China.

As a leading international university, having Chinese students is an important feature.

#### Life on campus:

**What are the best facilities on your campuses?**

—gorrila

Our best facilities include one of the biggest libraries in the Southern hemisphere, the largest international student learning support program in Australia, a careers and employment service with international career consultants, over 150 clubs and societies including a ski club, a rowing club on the famous Yarra River and a school of graduate studies.

**What is student housing like? Do you provide home-stay services?**

—greentea

We offer a wide range of assistance for living in Melbourne through our student support unit. They will help you to find the sort of housing that suits you best.

Get more information at: [www.services.unimelb.edu.au/housing/](http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/housing/).

**Is there a Chinatown in Melbourne?**

—xinghua001

Melbourne has a vibrant Chinatown that's a 10-minute walk from the university.

**Are you in favor of students getting part-time jobs? How many hours are students allowed to work per week?**

—ballpen

Yes, the university really encourages students to work part-time. You can do this up to 20 hours per week during university terms and full-time during the holidays.

The university also has special programs for international students to assist them in finding work such as careers online service and Kick Start your Career. This is a semester-long program that helps students to start thinking about and developing their long term career plans.

**Are there any museums or galleries in your university?**

—rosypuppy

Yes. The Medical History Museum houses a research collection documenting the history of our university's medical school and the history of medical practice in Victoria.

The George Paton Museum is a visual art space with occasional performance art pieces. The focus of the space is students – as artists, curators and audience.

The Ian Potter Museum of Art houses the University of Melbourne's art collection, which is comprised of Australian art, classics and archaeology, international indigenous cultural material and decorative arts.

(Edited By Zhang Nan)

#### Notice

Beijing Today will invite Christine Cox, head of the international office at the University of New South Wales to the Study Abroad Salon at 2 pm, Monday, February 7.

You are welcome to log on to: <http://bjtoday.ynet.com>, or forward questions to the host Ayi at: [hostayi@ynet.com](mailto:hostayi@ynet.com).

#### 通知

“今日北京”将在下周一(2月7日)下午2:00邀请新南威尔士大学国际部主任Ms. Christine Cox来“留学聊天室”与网友交流。

欢迎届时登陆:

<http://bjtoday.ynet.com>,

或发问题给主持人阿义:

[hostayi@ynet.com](mailto:hostayi@ynet.com)

Splendid Australia:

## US Welcomes Chinese Students

By Zhao Hongyi

"The United States welcomes students from China," Donald M. Bishop, minister-counselor for press and cultural affairs told local Chinese media and student organizations on January 26 at the American Center for Educational Exchange in the Jingguang Center.

Bishop explained efforts made by the US Embassy to improve the process of evaluating visa applications and provided figures on Chinese students studying in the United States. He also touched on the strengths of the US higher education system.

**Q: Many Chinese students complain going to the US is difficult. What do you think?**

**A:** Yes, when I visit campuses I'm asked many questions about visas. In fact, in 2002, more than 26,000 Chinese received visas to study in the US. In 2003, the number declined to 18,000. In 2004, it went up again to 22,000.

The 2003 decline may give the impression of a closed door, but the numbers declined because fewer students applied. In 2002, just a little fewer than half of the applicants received visas. This past year, probably two-thirds of the applicants were successful.

**Q: Some people in China say their visa applications have been denied without any reason or they are forced to wait at least three months. What factors are causing such situations?**

**A:** In 2002 and 2003, there were delays in issuing visas to students in science and engineering. The waiting time has, however, been dramatically shortened – to between three weeks and a month in most cases.

**Q: What advice do you have for Chinese students preparing their visa applications?**

**A:** Four points are very, very important: an honest application, a well-considered study plan, enough money and ties to China after graduation.

**Q: How many Chinese students are in the US?**

**A:** Last year, the number was 61,765, according to the Institute for International Education. This is nearly 11 percent of all the foreign students in our country. Only India has more students in the US, about 80,000.

**Q: Please give us some information on the US' higher education system.**

**A:** The US has more than 2,300 four-year, degree-granting colleges and universities, and 1,800 two-year community colleges. Most are run by the 50 states, but there are many private and religious universities.

Many Chinese students focus on the world-famous 'name schools'. But the universities in the 50 states, which educate nearly 80 percent of American students, have great programs and courses.

**Q: But a new style for studying in the US is emerging for undergraduate students.**

**A:** Yes, there is a new "1-2-1" undergraduate programs. A Chinese student spends his/her first year in China, then studies two years in the US, and returns to China for the last year and the bachelor's degree.

**Q: You mentioned the Institute for International Education. What is that organization?**

**A:** The IIE is an organization that focuses on providing accurate information about US higher education worldwide. They have a new staffer in Beijing working at the American Center for Education Exchange. People interested in studying in the US are advised to check the Web sites [www.iie-china.org](http://www.iie-china.org) and [www.usembassy-china.org.cn](http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn).

## New Zealand OKs Loans for Chinese Students

By Zhao Hongyi

The New Zealand Immigration Service Beijing Office issued a notice last week that Chinese students are now allowed to apply for loans from CITIC Industrial Bank to support their studies in New Zealand.

"This will help students to more easily provide documentation for their visas," the notice said. The new initiative was started on January 10.

To get more information, *Beijing Today* interviewed Hope Dixon, immigration counselor at the New Zealand Embassy in Beijing.

**Q: Why did you launched this initiative?**

**A:** To make it easier for potential Chinese students to obtain visas and take advantage of the opportunities to study in New Zealand.

**Q: Who can apply for the loans?**

**A:** Any applicant anywhere from the Chinese mainland. But this does not include those who want to emigrate, or schedule trips to New Zealand as tourists.

**Q: What size loans can students can apply for?**

**A:** 300,000 yuan is the minimum requirement. For students planning degree studies, they can apply for 300,000 yuan. Students planning language learning or preparatory courses, then onto tertiary education require approximately 500,000 yuan to 600,000 yuan.

**Q: How long can students get the loans?**

**A:** Three to six years, depending on study plan.

**Q: Where can I get the application forms?**

**A:** Application forms are available in the New Zealand Immigration Service Office in Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong and CITIC Bank outlets nationwide.

**Q: Is a successful loan enough evidence to apply for a student visa?**

**A:** Yes, just hand in the approved bank loan document to the immigration office for evaluation. There's no need to prepare any more bank documentation such as deposit certificates.

**Q: Is this new practice a safe guard for you to receive financially qualified students?**

**A:** It is a safe guard to ensure students can support their studies without having to work illegally. But the primary reason is to make it easier for students and parents to prove their financial ability. It will also help the immigration office process visas more easily.



By Gareth George

It's a dog's life at Beijing's newest dog market.

As Beijing's long, dry winter rolls into its fourth month, perhaps a little companionship might be just the ticket.

If you're planning a long term residence here in the capital, a canine sidekick can work wonders for your mental well being – and it's a good excuse to go exploring the many parks and side streets you might not ordinarily have

started here in March, getting things reading," Mei said.

Before that, he was in charge of a housing district, dealing with tenants' complaints.

"I prefer it here. I didn't know too much about dogs, but the people here really know the breeds they sell – I learn something every day," Mei said. "And instead of dealing with complaints, I spend my time playing with my 'tenants'."

narrow alley – it's no trouble to find, you can follow the barking. The animals are mostly kept in large cages where they can meet and greet prospective buyers.

One of the stall owners, Shi Jing, has made it his business to sell a complete dog service.

"I sell everything – dog medicine, leads, beds, clothes for winter, special food, toys, dog toilets," Shi said. Most of his dogs are smaller breeds, like spaniels and terriers.

of mine to have somewhere like this. I love dogs," he said.

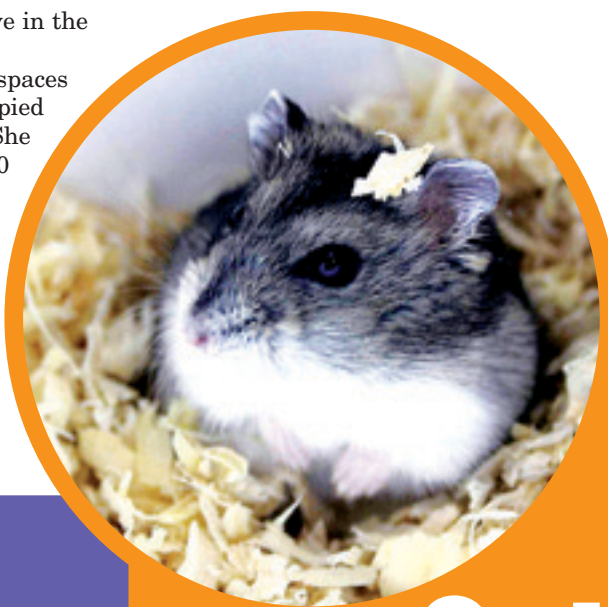
Accordingly, he feeds his dogs three times a day and is careful to ensure that each dog has the right combination of vitamins and minerals for health. And every night he takes all the little dogs home with him – 20 of them live in his house – while providing air conditioning for the bigger ones that stay behind.

Liu Hongyun takes her dogs walking twice a day. She's

dogs are allowed to live in the city center.

One of the larger spaces at the market is occupied by old Xia Shucong. She has sold dogs for 10 years. Her cousin runs a dog farm and provides the animals she sells.

Most of the dogs she has at the moment are large, husky like animals. Lupine in appearance, they



## Pet Paradise

By Wang Yao

Lovers of animals and low prices will swoon for the Chong Chong store in the Andingmen area, which offers all kinds of pet care products and is a great place to meet other pet-o-philes.

The store is run by a group of students from Beijing Normal University who said they set up the business to express their care for animals and the environment instead of simply to make a profit, and they show it by pricing many goods lower than at competing shops.

Good examples are the price tags on bottles of French-made Leberren brand nutrition supplements for dogs, which are about 30 yuan lower than standard in the local market. The liquid mixtures add vital nutrients and minerals like calcium, zinc and vitamins to dogs' diets and are easy to use and good for mature dogs of all sizes. Owners unsure of where their pets' nutrition may be lacking can go straight for the complex nutrient supplement, which contains all kinds of natural goodness to perk up any mutt.

For the felines, Chong Chong stocks two kinds of natural plants, imported from an American grower, capable of soothing cats' stomachs and minds. The first, dubbed "cat grass", is sold as seed for easy cultivation at home with a provided growth enhancer. When it grows long, cats love rubbing against the spiky grass because it quickly renders their fur soft and smooth. Taken internally, the grass can help cats digest fur balls and ward off potentially dangerous kitty constipation.



Cat grass is a natural groomer.

The other herbal product is catnip, but at Chong Chong it has the spaced-out name of "KooKamunga". Just the smell of it is enough to get cats excited – when they can actually roll in it and nibble, things really get wild. Bags of the natural feline narcotics sell for 58 yuan each.

Among the more practical items are cans of spray that can help young pets learn where it's OK to go, where is off limits and where to do their business. One spray lasts up to 24 hours and gives dogs and cats a clear sense of what is what.

Cats are likely to derive much more pleasure from the smell of Japan's Maruha brand foods, cans filled with top quality fish and other ingredients that are full of nutrition and easy to digest. This high-end cat food brand is very hard to find in the local market, but Chong Chong can set interested customers up with fresh supplies.

Dog owners can help their "best friends" chomp into old age with a special kind of toothpaste meant just for removing the potentially harmful, and certainly sometimes stinky, tartar and residue left on their pets' teeth by common chew toys. The paste is edible, completely non-toxic and simple to apply – just rub a dollop onto your dog's teeth with your finger. It helps protect pooch chompers and leaves their breath smelling fresh and clean.

The animal lovers at Chong Chong even run a kennel service for dog owners on the move. They charge low fees of 30 yuan per day, including food and regular outside walks, for small dogs and 45 yuan for bigger ones.

**Where:** No.42 Dongshuncheng Lu, Andingmen, Dongcheng **Open:** 9 am - 7 pm **Tel:** 8404 3556

# Furry Friends

## and Where to Find Them



Photos by Li Shuzhuan

the strength to drag yourself off to. Now's as good a time as any - especially as dog licenses are becoming cheaper.

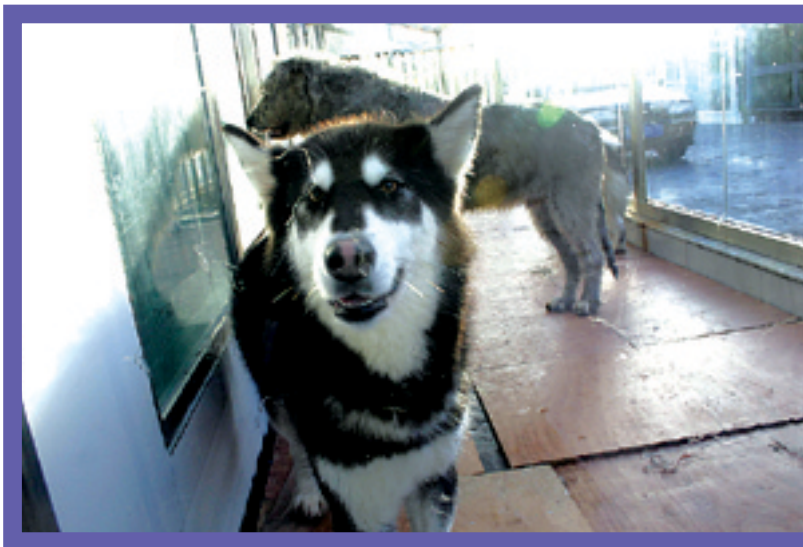
One of the best places to pick up a dog is Aisida mingquan jiaoyi shichang on the outskirts of the city. Looking as much like an old aircraft landing strip as anything, the dogs here breathe fresh air and have plenty of space to exercise.

One of the first things you'll notice as you walk onto the site is a small red roofed hut. That's where the dogs pick up their vaccinations.

"All the dogs here are inoculated against common canine diseases," one stall owner said. "It's vital with so many dogs around, all mixing together."

Mei Chenshan is one of market's managers. It's his job to promote trade and investment in the market.

"The market has only been open since October 2004, but I



Unfortunately, Mei's wife won't let him have a dog of his own. "She's very tidy and doesn't want the mess and hair getting everywhere. But I don't mind, I get to spend eight or nine hours here everyday."

The dogs are housed on a

"They range in price from around 100 yuan to 12,000 yuan. Special breeds, imported animals or rare hairless Chinese dogs are expensive."

Shi Jing has only sold dogs since the market opened here, but "it's always been a dream

younger than most of the sellers here, and is continually orbited by a couple of gormless retrievers.

Liu's family has sold dogs as long as she can remember, and she's always had them around. She can remember the bad old days, before inoculations were compulsory.

"Things are much better now - the dogs are healthier and this is better for people buying, too. I still hate saying goodbye to my dogs though. I get very attached to them."

Like many at the market, Liu Hongyun specializes in larger breeds, like Alsations. One word of warning - be sure and check how big your puppy will grow if you live within the Fourth Ring Road. Only small

are lively and friendly with striking glacial blue eyes. A pup will cost about 4,000 yuan.

Xia spends almost all of her time at the market. She lives there, in a little back room she shares with two new mothers and their litters (kept cosy by a large heat lamp) and a scrawny, yapping Chihuahua in a pink cardigan ("My guard dog," she calls him.).

She feeds them a mixture of corn, rice and duck. "I love working here with the dogs. They are so gentle and they have very human personalities. Everyone here loves their dogs and knows a lot about the breeds they sell. That is why this is the best place to come if you want a dog."

**Where:** Aisida dog market, Futou Jia 8, Fatouwangsi Xiang, Chaoyang

**Open:** 8:30 am - 6 pm, seven days a week

**Tel:** 6736 6650

## Picture Books

By Sabu Zhang

One of the more successful shop in the Dashanzi Art District, Timezone 8, or Bayi Shikong, has grown to become the biggest bookstore in the area since it opened in 2002.

The business is not only a book retailer, but also the local front of a Hong Kong-based publisher and distributor that focuses on contemporary art, architecture, photography and design. Run by American Robert Bernell, the shop is a virtual buyable museum of art books sure to have something for every art lover. Shelves and tables are stacked with albums of artists' works, periodicals and many rare and fascinating books on contemporary Chinese art.

One of the books published by the bookstore itself is *Beijing 798: Reflections on Art, Architecture and Society in China* (247



Photo by Sabu

yuan), a 430-page study on the Dashanzi Art District with vivid pictures of how the Beijing 798 factory transformed from an East German-designed military manufacturing site into a contemporary art and culture center, reflecting the radical social and cultural changes that have swept Beijing and China in recent decades. There are also works by famed Chinese contemporary artists such as Ai Weiwei, Wang Qingsong, Wang Guangyi and Xu Bing that range in price from 200 yuan to 350 yuan.

The store's inner room houses many intriguingly designed books in Japanese and English. Readers unable to decipher the text will be able to appreciate their striking pictures of nudes,

contemporary design, performance art and more. Among the other fascinating items to check out are hardcover toms on Andy Warhol and Yoko Ono, a collection of Yoshtomo Nara's *Little Star Dweller* cartoons (266 yuan) and *Women*, a beautiful album of pictures by famed photographer of the stars Annie Leibovitz with remarks by the late Susan Sontag.

The quality art books do not come cheap, but some are going for 20 or 50 percent discounts these days. Customers that buy over 200 yuan of items at one time are eligible for VIP cards that promise five percent off future purchases.

**Where:** No.4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang **Open:** 10 am - 8 pm **Tel:** 8456 0336



## Personal Classifieds

## Accommodation

Furnished commercial/residential apartment of 106 square meters is for lease. Free parking. The apartment is located on the 3rd floor of a five-star hotel within northwest fourth ring road, close to shopping malls, banks, supermarket and restaurants. US\$1,000 per month plus utilities and deposit. Contact: Jennifer, 8844 7480, 13693189800, email: chouhwa@yahoo.com

Brand new studio, 80 square meters, in one of the new Suncity towers, 200 meters east of the subway station and Poly Plaza, is for rent. Fully furnished with all appliances (brands including Kholer, Ikea, Merten, etc.) and facilities such as swimming pool and gym. 24 hour hot water & security; wooden floor, spacious sitting room and bathroom, open kitchen, Satellite TV channels including CNN, HBO, etc.; High-speed broad brand Internet connection. 6,000 yuan per month or US\$720 per month. Contact: inquiry@macewan.com.cn

## Language Exchange

Nine-year-old Beijing girl who has been studying English for four years would like to search for a native English speaking girl in Beijing to make a friend and practice English. She would also like to help her little partner learn Chinese. All inquiries are welcome. Contact: nzwilliam@163.com, 8621 4579

## Professional Help

Candy, 23, a professional Chinese teacher, can speak German and English. She offers a Chinese course for German speakers. Contact: 13810438396

An international four-star hotel is seeking a Food & Beverage Manager or a Food & Beverage Director. Must be a Chinese citizen with fluent English. Prior experience in international hotel preferred. Send your resume and motivation letter to gmanager@novotelxinqiaobj.com

English Speaking Taxi Cab service in Beijing, providing sight seeing to the Great Wall, long and short term rental, airport pick up and drop off. Contact: Edward Wang, 13651294061, 13683132022

International environmental organization seeks highly motivated, competent and experienced Chinese national to work on project development and implementation, member relations and other duties. Excellent spoken and written English is required. Interested parties should send their CV to: iucn@iucn.org  
**Disclaimer:** Beijing Today does not take responsibility for verifying the authenticity of the personal classifieds and thus Beijing Today does not guarantee the accuracy, integrity or quality of the content. All content is the sole responsibility of the advertiser.

## Music



## Symphony Orchestra of Russia: New Year Concert

The Symphony Orchestra of Russia was founded in 1991. Since then, it has been warmly welcomed by audiences around the world, in Spain, Italy, Turkey and Japan. The orchestra is well known for performing the works of master Russian composers such as Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov.

**Where:** Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng **When:** 7:30 pm, February 9 **Admission:** 60-1,000 yuan **Tel:** 6500 1188 ext. 5126



## Dialogue Between Art and Commerce

This is a modern art exhibition exploring the meaning and relationship between art and commerce, involving paintings, cartoons, installation, video and sculpture by 30 contemporary artists. This multimedia exhibition is intended by the artists to open a dialogue to raise people's attention to art. Supported by Beijing Millennium Art Gallery.

**Where:** Ti'an Center, 6 Beisihuan Donglu, Chaoyang **When:** daily 2 pm - 6 pm, until February 28 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 13911166261



## Activities



## Exhibitions

## France in China

Imagine Gallery presents works by Nicola L which have been shown all over the world, from New York to Venice, Geneva and Paris. Nicola L is an exponent of the new realist movement which began in the late 1960s.

**Where:** Imagine Gallery, Feijiacun, Cuigezhuang, Laiguangying Donglu, Chaoyang **When:** daily 10:30 am - 7 pm until February 18 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6438 5747

## Celebrate the Spring Festival

Works by Chinese oil masters Chen Yifei, Chen Yanning and famous artists Jin Shangyi, Wei Qimei, Dai Ze, Liu Xun, Sun Zixi, Liu Tianxiang, Zhao Youping, Shao Jingkun, Gao Quan, Wang Lu, Wei Zuyin, Tan Difu, Wang Yipeng, Ai Xuan Chao Ge, Zhang Li, Yang Keshan and Shi Benming. Supported by Mainland Artist Gallery.

**Where:** 3/F, Classic Furniture Market, 519 Fenzhongsi, Nansanhuan Donglu, Chaoyang **When:** February 6 - March 6, daily 9 am - 6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6773 6053



## Modern Oils Show

To celebrate the Spring Festival. The exhibits will include the latest works by Luan Xiaojie, Pang Yongjie, Feng Feng and Li Qiang.

**Where:** Qin Gallery, 1-1 E Enjoy Paradise, Huaweili, north of Beijing Curio City, Chaoyang **When:** daily 9 am - 7 pm until February 28 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461



## Li Yun's Work Show

Living in Songzhuang, Li Yun can paint what she likes without concern for the market. Her series about giving and asking express ideas about religion, love and death, making people re-think their life.

**Where:** Songzhuang Gallery, 1 Renzhuang Beilu, Tongzhou **When:** daily 9 am - midnight until February 28 (appointment only) **Admission:** 15 yuan **Tel:** 6959 8343

like this are disappearing because villagers are starting to use gas rather than firewood and with better roads built in recent years, less people need to use the mountain trails. The peak is 800 meters above sea level. A reward of this climb is that you will get breathtaking views.

**Where:** Changping District, north of Beijing **When:** Sunday, leaving at 8:30 am from the Lido Hotel outside of Starbucks **Cost:** 150 yuan (100 yuan for children under 12) **Tel:** 13910025516 (Reservations essential)

## Guilin Spring Festival Cycle Tour

To Guilin by air on February 9, to enjoy sightseeing at the beautiful Lijiang River and other famous sites. Try some superb Guilin cuisine, and check out Guilin's nightlife. Then back to Beijing by air on February 13.

**When:** February 9 **Cost:** 4,800 yuan **Tel:** 6553 3920 (register before Sunday)



## Movies

## Seoul Raiders

Seoul Raiders, the sequel to hit Hong Kong movie *To-kyo Raiders* will screen during the Spring Festival. This film boasts a star-studded cast including veteran Hong Kong actor Tong Leung, singer and actor Richie Jen and screen beauty Hsu Qi. Directed by Ma Weihao.

**Where:** UME International Cineplex (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Kexueyuan Nanlu, Shuangyushu, Haidian **When:** opens February 8 **Admission:** 80 yuan **Tel:** 8211 5566

## Spring Festival (Guo Nian)

Directed by Huang Jianzhong, starring Li Baotian, Zhao Lirong and Ge You. The Cheng Family home is the setting for this tragi-comedy set in modern-day China. The Cheng family is made up of thirteen people whose occupations include factory worker, peasant, teacher, student and high-ranking official. Representing different classes of society, they compose a snapshot of China in the 1990s through their different attitudes, agreements and disputes.

**Where:** Cherry Lane Movies Theater, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** 8 pm, tonight and Saturday **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 13501251303

## Thunderbirds

Directed by Jonathan Frakes, starring Brady Corbet, Bill Paxton, Soren Fulton and Ben Kingsley. Having narrowly averted a major disaster on an oilrig, the Thun-



derbirds have just returned home to their secret base when TB5, their space based station, is critically damaged in a suspected meteor strike. Unbeknown to them, the attack on TB5 is part of a devious scheme drawn up by international master criminal Aristotle Spode.

**Where:** UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Kexueyuan Nanlu, Shuangyushu, Haidian **When:** opens February 10 **Admission:** 80 yuan **Tel:** 8211 5566



## Performances



## Peking Opera

Senior and promising performers from China's National Peking Opera House will gather in the Forbidden City Concert Hall, to present some of the premier arias of Peking Opera. The leading Peking Opera stars include Li Shiji, Geng Qichang, Yang Chunxia, and young Peking Opera performers include Diao Li, Deng Min, Guan Bo and Deng Yan, along with many others.

**Where:** Forbidden City Concert Hall, in Zhongshan Park, Xicheng **When:** 7:30 pm, February 9-10 **Admission:** 80-880 yuan **Tel:** 6559 8285

## Spirit of Broadway

Performed by American artists. Some 20 musicals of the 20th century that have been staged over the past 25 years or so on Broadway, including *Chicago*, *42nd Street*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Evita*, *Cats* and many others will be highlighted with selections of songs and dance numbers.

**Where:** Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng **When:** 7:30 pm, February 4-7 **Admission:** 180-1,280 yuan **Tel:** 6500 1188 ext. 5126



## Bejart Ballet

The legendary Maurice Bejart will bring his famous company Bejart Ballet Lausanne to Beijing as part of his 2005 World Tour. Audiences in Beijing might still remember the Bejart Ballet from their last tour in 2001, and this time the company will present an extravagant program with four enthralling dances: *Seven Greek Dances*, *Adagietto*, *Fire Bird*, and *Bolero*.

**Where:** Beijing Exhibition Hall Theater, 135 Xizhimenwai Dajie, Xicheng **When:** 7:30 pm, February 25-26 **Admission:** 180-1,280 yuan **Tel:** 6835 4455

## TV and Radio Highlights

HBO

4 Friday

|            |      |
|------------|------|
| Conspiracy | 9 pm |
|------------|------|

5 Saturday

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Lost in Translation | 9 pm |
|---------------------|------|

6 Sunday

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| Minority Report | 9:55 pm |
|-----------------|---------|

7 Monday

|            |      |
|------------|------|
| Ghost Ship | 9 pm |
|------------|------|

8 Tuesday

|            |         |
|------------|---------|
| Old School | 6:45 pm |
|------------|---------|

9 Wednesday

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| Made in Manhattan | 9 pm |
|-------------------|------|

10 Thursday

|        |          |
|--------|----------|
| Eraser | 10:45 pm |
|--------|----------|

CCTV-9

Monday - Friday

|              |         |
|--------------|---------|
| Around China | 6:30 am |
|--------------|---------|

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| Culture Express | 8:30 am |
|-----------------|---------|

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Nature and Science / |  |
|----------------------|--|

|                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| Chinese Civilization | 11:30 am |
|----------------------|----------|

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| Culture Express | 2:30 pm |
|-----------------|---------|

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Nature and Science / |  |
|----------------------|--|

|                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| Chinese Civilization | 5:30 pm |
|----------------------|---------|

|          |         |
|----------|---------|
| Dialogue | 7:30 pm |
|----------|---------|

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| News Updates / |  |
|----------------|--|

|            |      |
|------------|------|
| Asia Today | 8 pm |
|------------|------|

|              |          |
|--------------|----------|
| Sports Scene | 11:15 pm |
|--------------|----------|

Saturday

|            |         |
|------------|---------|
| Travelogue | 9:30 am |
|------------|---------|

|              |          |
|--------------|----------|
| Center Stage | 11:30 am |
|--------------|----------|

Sunday

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Sports Weekend | 10 am |
|----------------|-------|

|             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| Documentary | 10:30 am |
|-------------|----------|

|           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| This Week | 12:30 am |
|-----------|----------|

China Radio International 91.5 FM

Monday - Friday

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Easy FM Afternoon | 2-7 pm |
|-------------------|--------|

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Fun in Beijing | 5-5:30 pm |
|----------------|-----------|

|        |            |
|--------|------------|
| Joy FM | 9:05-11 pm |
|--------|------------|

Saturday

|                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| Music Memories | 8:05-11 am |
|----------------|------------|

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| Euro Hit 40 | 12:05-1 pm |
|-------------|------------|

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Musique Sans Frontières | 6:05-8 pm |
|-------------------------|-----------|

|        |            |
|--------|------------|
| Joy FM | 9:05-11 pm |
|--------|------------|

Sunday

|                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| Music Memories | 8:05-11 am |
|----------------|------------|

|           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| Jazz Beat | 6:05-8 pm |
|-----------|-----------|

|        |            |
|--------|------------|
| Joy FM | 9:05-11 pm |
|--------|------------|

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language-exchange and accommodation information for individuals. Feel free to email us at [bjtodayinfo@ynet.com](mailto:bjtodayinfo@ynet.com) or call 6590 2518

By Zhang Jianzhong



# Island Dreams



Las Vegas style exterior of Lotte Resort Hotel

By Jane Ram

Covering an area of 1,845 square kilometers, Jeju Island measures about 40 kilometers long by 90 kilometers wide. It is the largest of a group of 63 basalt islands, of which only eight are inhabited, but all are reminders of the time some 2 million years ago when this was a region of lively volcanic activity.

Sparsely populated, Jeju was one of Korea's least prosperous areas until honeymooners discovered its charms three decades ago. Young Korean

year Jeju was in the international spotlight as the venue for the Asian Development Bank meeting. The APEC meeting will raise the island's profile even higher in May this year as heads of state line up for group photographs on the terraces of the French-inspired Shilla Cheju.

Jeju offers something for everyone. Outdoor types enjoy the opportunities for pony trekking, hiking up the slopes of the extinct volcano, Mount Halla, Korea's highest peak at almost 2,000 meters, golf and a wide choice of water sports including snorkeling, scuba diving and wind surfing.

thus no need for locks.

Tourism has wrought many changes for the locals, but they still claim that one person in five earns a living from the sea. In many families women have been professional divers, harvesting sea urchins and shellfish for generations. If you go down to the island's rocky beaches on the southern coast you will see these women as they come ashore with their baskets of sea urchins and other delicacies.

Traditional Donegal tweed, hand-knitted sweaters and other Irish craft items are among the more unusual souvenirs from Jeju. An Irish

Palm trees, rugged inland peaks and pristine beaches around the coast, abundant fruit and flowers, and enigmatic carved stone figures make Jeju a true treasure island for tourists. Sometimes referred to as Cheju, the island lies some 150 kilometers from the southernmost point of the Korean peninsula and is one of Asia's most popular resort destinations.



Grandfather stone



Glasshouse at Yeomiji

Photos by Jane Ram



couples came here with their wedding cakes to form a strange ménage à trois for a few days honeymoon. The young couple gazed into each other's eyes alongside dramatic waterfalls or posed for souvenir pictures in the midst of fields of bright yellow flowering rape or groves of the famous local oranges. Two or three decades later these same honeymooners are back, but they do not stay at the modest inns of their first visit: they are sufficiently prosperous to patronize the island's luxury resorts.

The new generation of Korean honeymooners generally opt for overseas resorts to celebrate their marriage, but Jeju has become more international in its appeal and is now popular with Japanese newlyweds. Young Chinese couples are also starting to discover the island as Jeju's fame grows.

Thanks to one of Asia's best convention and meeting centers, every year brings more international conferences and meetings to the island. In April last

Watch the evening Las Vegas style show at the Lotte Resort and then dance the night away as you try out some of the island's many discos, or challenge Lady Luck at the casinos in the Hyatt or the Shilla Cheju hotels.

The total population of Jeju is still little more than 550,000, about half of whom live in Cheju city. An island tour bus goes around the circuit of local attractions from mysterious caves and museums to some of the more picturesque traditional villages, complete with thatched roof dwellings. Traditionally minded residents still place their gate-rails in such a way as to indicate whether they are at home, and if they are at home, whether visitors are welcome at this hour of the day.

Locals boast that Jeju has three "plenties" and three "lacks." The plenties are stone, wind and women, while the lacks are beggars, thieves and locks. In a place where everyone can produce enough food to be self-sufficient, people say, there is no incentive for thieves and

priest encouraged the introduction of Donegal sheep and later he arranged for Irish nuns to instruct the locals in the making of hand-loomed Donegal tweed in the authentic way. Later the project diversified into knitting traditional Irish sweaters, using time-honored patterns. Visitors are encouraged to watch the weavers and knitters at work and a sizeable showroom is well stocked with garments and lengths of cloth. The settlement includes a rather basic hostel where it is possible to arrange inexpensive accommodation.

Grandfather stones (*harubang*) are among Jeju's most intriguing features. These massive sculptures have some of the same brooding intensity as the Easter Island statues. Anthropologists have yet to come up with a convincing explanation as to the origin of these carvings, although the general theory is that they were once significant as fertility symbols of some sort. There are still some originals, but these days most of the *harubang* that

The high levels of humidity make lush green gardens a reality throughout the year. Go to the gardens that stretch from the Shilla and the Lotte hotels to the cliff tops overlooking the sea. The place is beautifully landscaped and plants are carefully labeled with their botanical names in English as well as in Korean and Japanese. Even when it's not raining, be prepared for mysterious swirls of mist and theatrical clouds sweeping in from the ocean. These all heighten the feeling that Jeju is a truly magical place. No wonder the locals have their own hierarchy of deities mostly associated with special stones or trees in different parts of the island.

A few hours of rain need not be disastrous as the island offers plenty of indoor options, including many museums – even one devoted to Teddy Bears. The Jeju National Museum houses an extensive collection of artifacts from early times, and a superb pottery collection assembled through the ages.

For something different, indulge in some serious pampering time at the newly opened Guerlain Spa at the Shilla Cheju. This haven of tranquility and wellbeing is the first such Spa outside Paris and the products and treatments are outstanding. Allow time at the Shilla to take in the hotel's superb collection of modern art, much of it by contemporary Korean artists, but with some fabulous pieces by Picasso and Dali among others.

The Jeju Tourist Botanical Garden, Yeomiji, is one of the best places to spend time whatever the weather. If the weather is fine, explore the varied outdoor gardens inspired respectively by the traditions of Korea, Japan, France and Italy. There's a large sunken garden and lawn area, plus a section devoted to palms and local plants, and a herb garden. A small electric train carries you round the different sections for a quick overview.

When it is cold or wet, however, the 12,500-meter glass-covered Indoor Gardens come top of the list of Jeju attractions. The garden is laid out like a giant wheel, with the "hub" rising to a height of about 40 meters to give spectacular views from a central observation gallery.

The outer area of the wheel is divided into five very different gardens, each landscaped independently of the others. Perhaps the most spectacular are the Water Lily Garden, the Jungle Garden and the Tropical Fruits Garden. Examples of types of fruit typical to each are displayed alongside the trees in the glass-enclosed orchard.

The Water Lily garden has a natural looking waterfall and rock stairway, which form a natural setting for all types of tropical and sub-tropical aquatic plants as well as the superb water lilies in the decorative ponds. Fiberglass dinosaurs prowl through the swamps and tropical rain forest in the Jungle Garden. Ferns, insect-eating plants and all kinds of shade-loving plants set the imagination racing in this section.

## Jeju Tips >>>

Getting to Jeju is easy as KAL has several flights throughout the day. Frequent shuttle buses leave Jeju airport and drop or collect passengers on their circular routes.

Accommodation is available in all price brackets from very basic student type dormitories to ultra luxury resorts like the Shilla Cheju.

The Internet is part of South Korea's lifestyle, a real boon for anyone in search of information on local attractions. Some good sites include:

<http://jeju.nationalmuseum.go.kr>  
[www.yeomiji.or.kr](http://www.yeomiji.or.kr)